Monday, March 23, 2009 • Vol. 24 / No. 105 website: www.inquirer.net

US gov't wants to buy up banks' toxic assets — **WORLD** / A28
GMA to seek Blair help on Mindanao — **NEWS** / A2
What Jean Goulbourn has learned — **LEARNING** /F4
Reminiscing with Kuya Eddie — **ENTERTAINMENT**/ E3
How to cut costs in a recession — **BUSINESS** / B2-1

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WORLD WATER DAY Visitors cool themselves at the Wawa Dam, a special reservoir and pumping facility built by American soldiers in 1909 in Rodriguez, Rizal, that is currently idle due to waste pollution. The United Nations marked World Water Day on Sunday with the theme "Shared water, shared opportunity." (For more photos, see instructions on Page A18.)

Panlilio worries 2 bishops

Coalition launches gov's bid for president

By Tonette Orejas, Dona Pazzibugan and Nikko Dizon

TWO CHURCH LEADERS HAVE RAISED THEIR objections to Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, a Catholic priest, seeking the country's highest public office in the national elections next year.

A coalition of private groups yesterday launched a movement to urge Panlilio and Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca to run for president and vice president, respectively.

It also launched a grass-roots fundraising campaign to support alternative leaders and politics.

"The more a priest goes up the political ladder, the more detrimental it could be to his priesthood," said San Fernando Archbishop Paciano Aniceto, Panlilio's immediate superior.

Aniceto told the Inquirer yesterday that he was worried that the priesthood could be used for political ends.

Panlilio, who is suspended from performing priestly duties, defeated two administration candidates in a close race for the governorship in Pampanga in 2007.

He vowed to rid the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo of corruption mainly

PANGUIO A22

PAMPANGA Gov. Ed Panlilio on presidential bid: "If I decide to run and feel it runs, that's a sign."

Why Edsa keeps coming back

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER Ferenc Gyurcsany has stunned his country by announcing his resignation amid the rumbling popularity of his ruling socialist party battered by the worst financial crisis Hungary faced since the end of communism nearly 20 years ago.

In a rare moment of candor for any beleaguered national leader, Gyurcsany told his party congress on Saturday that he was stepping down because he had become an "obstacle" to reforms needed to pull Hungary out of is financial crisis.

"I'm being told that I myself am the obstacle to the cooperation and stable government majority needed to implement changes," Gyurcsany said. "If this is so, I will eliminate this obstacle."

WHY EDSA A11

AFP handling of kidnapping irks Gordon

By Christine O. Avendaño

IS IT A CASE OF TOO MANY cooks spoiling the broth?

Sen. Richard Gordon yesterday said that President Macapagal-Arroyo should be held accountable if any of the three kidnapped workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is killed.

Gordon, chair of the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC), issued a statement strongly critical of the military handling of the 2-month-old hostage crisis amid hints that the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers will keep a promise to

AFP'S MUDDLING A2

Mancao to Lacson: 'Sleep soundly, sir'

By Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora

MORE THAN EIGHT YEARS have passed but the Dacer-Corbito murder story never seems to run out of twists.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday claimed that former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao II—the man who had linked him to the double murders—had told him on his bed back in last year that he (Mancao) would recant whatever statements he would make against the senator, thus boosting his presidential bid in 2010.

"Mancao said (diretso niya (he'll play along) but at the end, he would recant his statements," Lacson told the Inquirer, recounting what he said his former aide told him in a phone conversation in January 2008.

"Pinghoot mo, makakatulong sa 2010 (That would be your way of getting back at them, that will help you in 2010)," Lacson quoted Mancao as telling him.

The senator's disclosure of

MANCAO A12

Obama rhetoric, reality clash

WASHINGTON—BARACK OBAMA's optimistic campaign rhetoric has crashed headlong into the stark reality of governing.

In office for two months, he has backpedaled on an array of issues, gingerly shifting positions as circumstances dictate, while dashing for political cover to avoid undercutting his credibility and authority.

That's happened on the Iraq troop withdrawal timeline, on lobbyists in his administration and on earmarks for lawmakers' pet projects.

"Change doesn't happen overnight," Obama said at a town-hall style event in Gallipolis on Thursday, seeming to acknowledge the difficulty in translating campaign pledges

OBAMA A23

Lifestyle amid crisis? Try online renting

SINGAPORE—A LOUIS VUITton bag, diamond-inlaid guitar, Gucci shades and a dog. Total cost? Less than S$1,000 (US$694). The catch is, you're only renting.

As consumers salting to survive

LIFESTYLE A8

Alaminos revelry lures investors

By Yolanda Sotelo
Inquirer Northern Luzon

ALAMINOS CITY—LETING band music woke up residents here at 5:30 a.m. on Wednesday, which signaled the start of a five-day fiesta celebration.

Tourists and locals swarmed to the city's major streets to join the civic and military parade featuring the religious images

ALAMINOS A6

VOLUNTEERS bring education materials to Cavite City's street children on pushcarts.

CNN hero teaches literacy with pushcart

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

HIS EXPRESSION OF GRATItude comes in the form of a wooden pushcart loaded with crayons, books, pens, clothes, jugs of water, a blackboard and a Philippine flag.

Every Saturday, the pushcart goes to the public cemetery, market and dump in Cavite City where 28-year-old Efren Peñaflorida has been leading teenagers, for more than a decade now, in teaching street children basic literacy skills and values to save them from illegal drugs and prevent them from joining gangs.

Peñaflorida's pushcart has earned him recognition, the most recent being a citation from international news agency CNN as a modern-day hero. CNN gets nominees around the

CNN HERO A13

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FRIDAY: Mostly cloudy skies and hot and humid weather, with isolated thunderstorms. The rest of Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies and scattered thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.

Manila	Partly cloudy	Kalibo/Boracay	Partly cloudy
Baguio	Partly cloudy	Davao	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Partly cloudy
Legaspi	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Partly cloudy
Cloark/Subic	Partly cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly cloudy
Virginia	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly cloudy
Legaspi	Partly cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly cloudy
Dipolog	Partly cloudy	Iligan	Mostly cloudy

PISO NATIN ANG PLDT 51.5% KONTROL NG PILIPINO NA KUMPANYA, PILIPINO ANG SERBISYO

SUERTRES

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1 6 9

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

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GMA to seek Blair help on Mindanao

By Christine V. Bagayaua and Jaymee Aning

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS SET TO meet with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair over lunch today to formally broach the idea of the foreign leader helping the Philippine government put an end to decades of Moro insurgency in Mindanao.

Blair arrived on a private jet around 10 a.m. yesterday at Villamor Airbase for speaking engagements.

The luncheon meeting with Ms Arroyo will be sandwiched between Blair's morning speech at Ateneo de Manila University, and one in the afternoon at ballroom of Philippine Plaza hotel in Roxas City sponsored by De La Salle University-Manila, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT)-Smart Foundation and Asian Institute.

Blair is being eyed by the Philippine government as an adviser on the peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which has waged a secessionist war in Mindanao for over 30 years.

Blair is currently a special envoy of the so-called Quartet on the Middle East (namely, the United Nations, European Union, United States and Russia), who are working on the peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

According to Press Secretary Cerge Remonde, Blair's luncheon meeting with Ms Arroyo will be a follow-up to previous discussions by both leaders on how Blair could be of help to peace negotiations with secessionist groups in the Philippines.

At a previous Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) summit, then Prime Minister Blair had volunteered to "help to the peace process in the Philippines," Remonde said yesterday over Radyo ng Bayan.

Remonde noted that Blair was instrumental in forging a peace agreement between Catholic nationalists and Protestant unionists in Northern Ireland in 1998.

"His insights and experience will be a big help in our problem in Mindanao," Remonde said, adding that the secessionist problem in Ireland was somehow similar to the problem in the Philippines.

Remonde also said another talking point at the luncheon would be the possibility of assisting the government peace panel members on "exposure trips" to Ireland for a better appreciation of the peace process in that side of the world.

ON HIS FIRST VISIT to the Philippines, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair is welcomed by (from left) Fr. Ben Nebres SJ, president of Ateneo de Manila University, British Ambassador Peter Buckingham, and PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Kofi Annan, too

Should MILF negotiators agree, they could also join the trip, he said.

Besides Blair, former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan is also on the government's list of "international figures who might be invited to a proposed Tripoint Persons Group to help the government deal with Islamic secessionism.

"In the pursuit of peace, all ideas, all help, all assisted peace, especially those with vast experience in the peace process, should be welcomed," Remonde said.

Tight security highlighted Blair's arrival. No details of his entourage were provided and his arrival was all frozen to the media.

George W. Bush's partner

Blair, a staunch partner of US President George W. Bush in the invasion of Iraq, was reportedly escorted by members of the Presidential Security Group.

Blair was welcomed by British Ambassador to the Philippines Peter Buckingham, Smart's organizer and PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan, and Ateneo University president Fr. Bienvenido Nebres.

Blair, 53, is scheduled to attend three key events today.

This morning, he will deliver a speech on "The Leader in Her Go Builder in a Time of Global Tension," at the Ateneo de Manila University-MBDP Leadership Forum to mark the private school's 130th founding anniversary.

In the afternoon, he will address the Second Leadership Conference Series at the Sofitel Philippine Plaza with a discussion on "The Leader as a Principled Negotiator."

Blair will also be conferred a special recognition by De La Salle.

Lastly, he will attend the Smart Infinity Awards dinner also at Sofitel.

This is Blair's first visit to the Philippines. He did not visit the country when he was prime minister from 1997 to 2007. With a report from Allison W. Lopez

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Indefinite visa launched for investors

IN A BID TO BOOST FOREIGN investments in the country in light of the global economic crisis, the Bureau of Immigration has begun implementing an indefinite visa program that would allow foreign investors and businessmen who employ at least 10 Filipino workers to stay in the Philippines.

Immigration Commissioner Marcelino Libanan said the BI has been accepting petitions for a Special Visa for Employment Generation (SVEG) as qualified foreigners after the program's implementing rules and regulations were ratified on March 9.

Libanan had earlier issued a memorandum prescribing the rules for the SVEG which was created pursuant to Executive Order No. 790 that President Macapagal-Arroyo signed on Nov. 17 last year.

A one-stop shop has been created in the bureau to receive, screen and process applications for SVEGs before these are forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for approval, Libanan said in a statement.

BI legal officer Uzi Villalobos, who was named head of the one-stop shop, said an SVEG applicant who qualifies shall initially be issued a probationary visa that is valid for a year, or a shorter indefinite visa.

Villalobos said the visa application fee is P3,520 plus P5,000 upon issuance of the visa.

Implementing rules

He said a visa holder shall also be required to get an I-Card which costs P80 (about P2,400) and pay an express lane fee of P500.

The implementing rules, according to Villalobos, provide that an SVEG shall be issued to a foreigner who will be setting himself up as a company or entity engaged in a business activity, enterprise or industry that employs at least 10 full-time and regular Filipino workers on a long-term basis in the Philippines.

The Filipino workforce must be employed within six months, preferably, from the date the foreigner is admitted into the country.

An applicant shall submit, among others, a notarized letter-request, copy of passport with updated visa, the company's articles of incorporation and proof of information sheet, proof of applicant's investment, and clearance from the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency and the BI.

Where necessary the applicant shall submit an alien employment permit (AEP) from the Department of Labor and Employment which shall cause exemption of the foreigner employee from the Filipino labor market test.

Moreover, the applicant shall certify that he or she maintains a lawful immigration status in the Philippines, is engaged in a viable and sustainable business, executive, managerial acts with authority to employ personnel, and remains responsive and attentive to the industry's needs in the country.

Penalties also be attached to the application showing that the Filipinos employed by the applicant were receiving benefits under the Labor Code such as social security and Philippine Health Insurance Corp. and Pag-Ibig Fund coverage. Arlene Jurado

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- Create solutions acceptable to both the customer and the company
- Quickly rebuild rapport with the customer
- Follow through to make sure all agreements and commitments are delivered

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Girl, 6, is latest AIDS patient—DOH

A 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL HAS BEEN found to have acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) through mother-to-child transmission, according to the Department of Health (DOH).

This was the fifth case of AIDS or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmission through pregnancy reported since the DOH began screening and monitoring those infected with HIV and AIDS in 1984.

Sixty-five new HIV-positive and AIDS cases, or an average of two cases per day, were confirmed in January this year, the highest recorded in a month since 1984, the DOH said.

The average number of new cases each month has steadily risen in the last four years, doubling from 30 in 2005 to 60 in 2006, 80 in 2007 and 66 in 2008.

Of the 65 HIV-positive cases reported in January, three were children AIDS cases, including the 6-year-old girl. The rest of the new cases were acquired through sexual transmission.

Increasing number of cases

Most of the latest patients were men, according to the DOH's HIV and AIDS Registry Hall of the patients' sites in their 20s.

The youngest was the 6 year old and the oldest patient a 57. There were no reported deaths in January, and 95 percent of the cases were still asymptomatic at the time of reporting.

The DOH noted the increasing number of cases where blocked access to condoms was the mode of transmission.

According to the latest registry data, most of the 55 new HIV-positive cases reported in January were in the National Capital Region. Twelve of the patients were concentrated in the region aged 25 to 37, who all acquired HIV through sexual contact.

Sexual transmission remained the top mode of infection, but the DOH noted that bisexual sex was the catching up with homosexual and heterosexual sex as the mode of transmission.

More men than women

Dr. Eric Tayag, head of the DOH's National Epidemiology Center, had said that since 2007 they noticed that for more men than women were getting HIV.

He said last April that the ratio of men to women was 4:1 "men who are sex with men."

Since 1984, there have been 3,004 HIV-positive cases reported, of which 806 developed into AIDS. Of that number, 317 have died.

Other modes of transmission include sex (infected mother passing it to her unborn child), through blood transfusion, during drug needles and needle-prick injuries.

Of the 3,004 persons with HIV, 49 percent or 1,254 were infected through sexual contact while one percent or 46 were infected through mother-to-child transmission.

Most of the HIV patients were in their 20s and 30s, the DOH said. Bryan Pinlac/Inquirer

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, March 23, 2009
4th Week of Lent
Weekday Mass weeks

1st Reading: Is 65:17-21
Gospel: Jn 4:43-54

In those days Jesus left Samaria for Galilee. Jesus himself said that no prophet is recognized in his own country. So the Galilean welcomed him when he arrived, because of all the things he had done in Jerusalem during the Festival, as they had also been there for the festival. Then he went to Cana in Galilee, where he had changed the water into wine.

Now there was a royal official whose son was sick, and when he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee he went and asked him to come and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders you will not believe." The official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." And Jesus replied, "Go, your son is living." The man took Jesus at his word and, on hearing this, went home his way. He was already going down the hill when his servants met him with the news that his son was living. When he asked them what time he had begun to recover, they told him, "The fever left him yesterday at the afternoon hour." And the father realized that it was the time when Jesus had said, "Your son is living." And he became a believer, he and all his family. Jesus performed this second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

Commentary:

Healing in the Gospel for Reflection this week, as Lenten devotions ply on, are special. We have a difficult time believing in something when we don't see or experience it for ourselves. The Bohemian merchant Ole Worsel, some suppose, only dreamt that kind of wealth he has to spend; a retired magistrate in Bruges, Belgium, only dreamt that he was legally blind; Jesus tells us we have to see to know, to repent their struggling between life and death, dying to slow agony under our eyes. And we humbly ask him for this. He was still alive when I passed by front of his house and called out, but was not sure we passed. Behind us, I heard the same man ask him, "Where is Katherine?" And I heard him say in reply in a strange accent, "Where is she? Here here... She is hanging here on these pillows."

Both a first blessing we have when, despite everything the world throws at us, we still genuinely believe in God and Christ's resurrection without having seen seen. We remember. To know how to relate seems like a hopeless problem to choose between and

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House bill would make spanking, ridiculing a child a crime

By Philip C. Tubeza

A BILL IN CONGRESS WOULD MAKE spanking, pinching and ridiculing a child punishable under the law.

The House committees on revision of laws and the welfare of children, chaired respectively by Rep. Georgili B. Aggabao (9th district, Isabela) and Rep. Monina Pilar Evalero (1st district, Tarlac), have approved to prioritize a bill prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment of children.

House Bill 602, authored by Pryce Teodoro, prohibits "all corporal punishment and all other forms of humiliating or degrading punishment of children in homes, schools and other places."

"As a lawmaker and as a parent, I cannot imagine hitting children as lawful while we believe it is against the law to hit other adults, prisoners and even animals," Pryce Teodoro said in a statement.

Pryce Teodoro said the bill defines the terms "as a punishment or penalty for an offense or imagined offense, not carried out for the purpose of discipline, training or control, inflicted by an adult who has been given or has assumed authority or responsibility for punishment or discipline."

Aquino said children should not be "slapped, kicked, burned, choked, beaten, pinched, whipped, have their nutrients restricted, threatened, terrorized, ridiculed, cursed, and belittled because they behaved badly, disobeyed their parents or the authorities, failed to perform tasks or chores to the satisfaction of adults, or because they did not listen to what the adults told them."

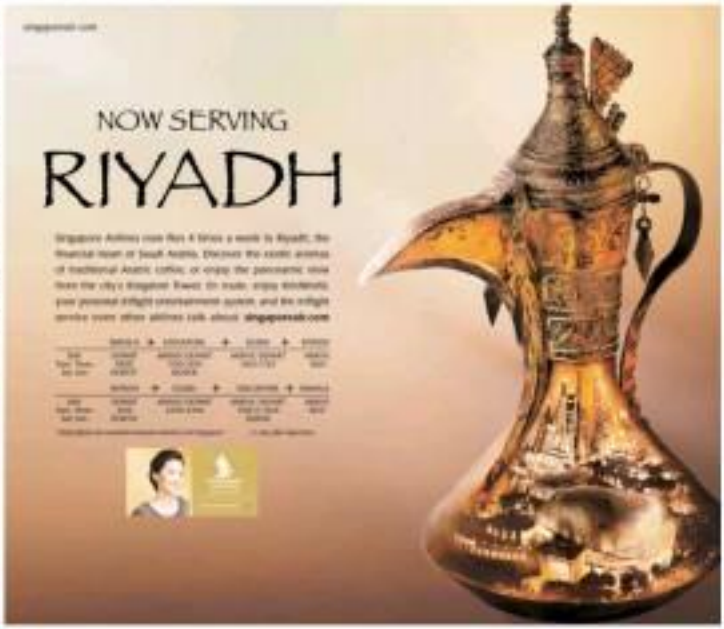
Rep. Maria Isabelle S. Climaco (1st dis-

trict, Zamboanga City) said the bill should also include some provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Philippines is a signatory.

"Corporal punishment poses great risks to the psychological and physical well-being of children," said Rep. Mariano U. Piamonte Jr. (Party list, 1 Teacher).

Under the bill, the Department of Social Welfare and Development shall formulate a comprehensive program to prevent corporal punishment of children in coordination with other government organizations and private sector members.

The bill provides interventions by welfare officers for abused children and those may include psychosocial intervention, preservice custody, temporary placement of the child, medical and legal services, and seminars on children's rights and counseling.



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AFP handling of Sulu crisis irks Gordon

Front page A1

GORDON

him to live at least one hostage.

"I shall hold the Palace and his minions responsible if any one of our three colleagues is killed in any irresponsible attempt to rescue them," Gordon said, accusing the military of ignoring his request to negotiate troops to find a turnover model (the plan).

The dead followed Gordon's telephone conversation on Thursday with the leader of the kidnappers, Albader Parad, that averted a threat to behead the hostages after the military launched a rescue attempt last week.

Gordon said that the military had ignored his request to negotiate troops and instead pulled out even before arrangements for a hostage handover could take place.

Three Marines and two kidnappers were killed and 19 soldiers were wounded in last week's clashes in the Sulawan forest on Jolo Island where Swiss teachers Norbert, 58, Lorenz Rugwiz Vagni, 62, and Filipino Mary Jane Lacsilo, 37, were kidnapped on Jan. 15.

Stopping into the impasse, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon called on Mr. Arroyo to outline to troops involved in the hostage crisis the chain of command and the orders that should be carried out to secure the release of the hostages.

"The President must define clearly the chain of command from whom ground commanders should receive their orders and recently and more importantly, she must define clearly the orders that the ground commanders would carry out," he said.

Biazon, a retired chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said in a telephone interview he wanted to know who was the military's civilian authority because he said he knew it to be Sulu Governor Tan, head of the crisis committee.

Meddling politicians

"Why is now Senator Gordon making direct contact with the military and terrorists?" he asked.

Biazon said that when he was still in the military he had been confronted with the problem of "politicians meddling in what I have to do."

He warned that the current situation could result in "dire consequences for the hostages."

"It blurs the ground commander for the details of the three Marine soldiers (set) stuck in midair," Biazon said, referring to Gordon's claims that Maj. Gen. Juanito Ealdon, the military commander in the area, was sabotaging the negotiations.

Gordon told ABS-CBN radio that he came into the picture when the threat was made to kill the hostages.

"That is the time I really went in high gear and started talking. It is the government's job, but after nine is doing it. Nobody is talking with them," Gordon said of the Abu Sayyaf. "I'm trying to save lives."

He said he got upset because faithless reduced the withdrawal of the troops and thus prevented the release of one hostage.

"All I'm saying is we have to get our act together," he said.

AFP standing by troops

Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres Jr., AFP spokesperson, said yesterday that the military was standing by its soldiers dealing with the hostage crisis.

"We put premium on trust. We trust our commanders and we limit their decisions," he said.

Torres said Ealdon had been "chosen by the crisis committee to make such calls."

Brig. Gen. Gaudencio Pangilinan, AFP Civil Relations Service chief, also pointed out that the government could not back on the commitment Parad gave to Gordon.

"We are talking to terrorists. Remember, they have a different mindset ... whether their noise good their commitment or not, we cannot bank on that," Pangilinan said in an interview over dzBB.

Press Secretary Gorgy Remonde said the government supported Gordon's admission that he had been betrayed by the kidnappers.

"That's why in cases like these it's better to leave it to government policy which is leaving this matter to the local crisis committee (and) with the full support of the (military and the police)," Remonde told reporters. **With reports from Jocelyn D. Uy and AFP**

Alaminos revelry lures investors

Front page A1

of St. Joseph, Alaminos' patron saint, and the barrio seats of Nother villages. Street dancers accompanied the parade.

Aberasturi, lauch was served to some 20,000 parade participants and spectators.

The five-day fiesta celebration, organized by city officials, started on March 28 in protest the city, which is known for the Hundred Islands and to attract investors.

The revelry—called "Gali Ay (Come) Hundred Islands Festival Sth Global Homecoming"—is an annual to persuade former residents of Alaminos, working or living abroad, to return for a vacation and invest in their old hometown.

It was also meant to reposition Alaminos and its crown jewel, the Hundred Islands National Park, on the tourism world map.

Happy to give back

Natives of this coastal city now living abroad were only too happy to give back to the community that had nurtured them.

Renato Hadvidad, 48, a nurse working in New York, was among the 60 natives who returned. A majority flew in from the United States while some came from Canada, Germany and Saudi Arabia.

Hadvidad, captivated by the city's economy, decided to invest. He and four other similar working abroad pooled their money and bet their set up Islandia Hotel in Barangay Palaoan. Their first guests were candidates for the 38th Binch beauty pageant.

Huge potential

Hadvidad said the city had the potential to become a major tourist destination as it is blessed by nature with the Hundred Islands, white sand beaches, mountains and plains devoted to rice farming.

He also came up with a "money-free fun package" for people who could want to visit the Hundred Islands but did not want to bother themselves with where to eat and sleep and how to get to the islands.

"Mayor [Hernani] Braganza is very aggressive in promoting tourism. Since most of the hotels here offer the same thing to tourists, we came up with a five-star package that includes hotel accommodation, boat transfers, an island picnic complete with rice and a waiter who will cook and serve food," he said.

Nenita Perol, 63, a lawyer based in Galveston, said he was amazed at how much progress Alaminos had made in such a short time.

"The strong leadership of Mayor Braganza and his close ranks for the city are paying off. Because of his program, tourists will flourish," he said.

Perol said former residents now living in the United States had abandoned or neglected their properties in Alaminos.

"The city was going nowhere but Braganza's vision has captured their enthusiasm and confidence and they have started coming back. They are developing their properties and investing in businesses," he said.

Perol was building a commercial and residential building in the poblacion and was helping in the green perpetual project of the local government to boost farmers' income.

Fiesta with relevance

While last filled, the five-day fiesta had relevance, showcasing the religious, cultural and economic activities of Alaminos.

They included a beauty contest, business sales, handicraft day workshops on shoreline cleaning, bamboo sawing and jousting.

Open to students were competitions like floral arrangement, vegetable and fruit carving, street design, poster making and basket weaving.

A source for the best tour package was held on Saturday, which challenged students making hotel and restaurant management courses.

They had to come up with a travel package that would include tours of churches and ancestral homes, island hopping and a visit to a resort with water sports facilities.

A cooking contest featuring the city's agricultural and marine products was also held that day.

"Through the Gonzalo Braganzian, we get to showcase our seafood and agricultural products including our newest industry—goat raising," Mayor Braganza said.

Texting while driving ban near passage

A PROPOSED NATIONWIDE ban on the use of mobile phones by motorists is nearing passage in the House of Representatives.

The House committee on transportation, chaired by Rep. Monico O. Puentevella (Bone district, Bacolod City), has approved in principle a bill banning the use of cell phones by motorists while driving to prevent road accidents.

The bill, which is a consolidation of House Bill Nos. 1525 and 4917, imposes a minimum fine of P500 for violators. The bills were authored by Pampanga Rep. Aurelio D. Dimpino Jr. and Bohay party-list lawmakers.

Four times more

Bohay party-list Rep. Irwin Tieng said statistics who used their cell phones while driving were four times as likely to get into crashes "serious enough to injure themselves, their passengers and pedestrians or kill."

"Using a cell phone while driving is analogous to driving when drunk," he said in a statement.

Rep. Irwin C. Tieng (PL-Bohay) said records from the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) metropolitan safety unit showed that there were 30,000 vehicular accidents in the capital during the first half of 2007 and "a number of these may be attributed to the use of mobile phones while driving."

Daily accidents

"Road accidents happen almost every day which result in death or serious injuries to the victims," Tieng said.

He party-mate, Rep. Ma. Carmen Cruz-Dimalanta, said countries such as Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Botswana, Chile, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Taiwan, Turkey, Switzerland, South Korea and the United Kingdom prohibited the use of hand-held phones while driving.

No national law

"In the Philippines, we have ordinances banning cell phone use while driving, but there is no (national) law yet to that effect," Cruz-Dimalanta said.

Pampanga's Dimpino said that although some cities had enacted local ordinances, there was a need to institute a similar measure on a nationwide scale "to protect life, limb and property."

The bill states that the MMDA will be the implementing agency to enforce the ban in Metro Manila while the Philippine National Police will implement it nationwide.

Philip C. Tubeza

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GSIS

Lifestyle amid crisis? Try online renting

Pampagkati

this worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Singaporeans are increasingly turning to Internet-based rental markets to at least maintain their sense of style.

Not like how food coffee shops can expect better business than restaurants in times of economic turmoil, I believe a guitar rental service would be much appreciated in these times," said Elaine Khaw, owner of Pencil A Guitar.

Her online company offers electric and classical guitars of various makes, as well as amplifiers and guitar accessories, for $40 to $80 per item a day—with a deposit, of course.

Although not yet able to provide figures, Khaw says she has been "pleasantly surprised" by the response to her service. She says the economic crisis partly inspired her to set up her business in February.

"I see the economic gloom as an opportunity for me to promote a service in which customers pay a smaller amount to rent the guitar rather than buy," Khaw says.

Another rental company that says it is doing well despite the gloomy economy is www.thatbagsmart.com, which allows trendy tradesmen to rent luxury handbags and sunglasses at prices easily lower than their retail cost.

"Because of the recession, business has gotten better," owner Tan Ho Ching says, adding that fashion-conscious customers unsure about buying costly bags are now considering his service to save money.

The customer base for www.thatbagsmart.com more than doubled in the three months after Singapore, in October last year, became the first home economy to enter recession.

"People who were sitting on the fence can now trying it out, preserving their capital," Tan says.

Dog-sharing service Easy Dogz has also seen more customers in recent weeks, according to owner Herbert Lim.

The service allows clients—to take home favorite furbabies, pedder-interviews and Jack Russells after paying start of $$30-$$50 a day on top of a $$130 membership fee.

The company has not been substantially affected by the economic downturn, Lim says. It has even received a boost after receiving talk in a local newspaper.

More conventional rental services also say business isn't lower to be brisk.

DIG rental firm Homepal Private Ltd says more people are signing up, with chief executive officer Eric Thian estimating a 20 percent rise in membership over the six months to February.

Homepal allows customers to rent DVDs over the Internet and delivers the movies to their homes by post. Members pay a monthly subscription fee and are allowed to keep the DVDs for as long as they want.

"There's more people staying at home. The is a form of entertainment that is affordable," Thian says.

Comics rental company Red Hands Gamers Club also saw more members sign up because of the economic downturn. Co-owner Jeffrey Tang says this is due to "convenient" cost-cutting measures during the holiday period. AFP

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ROYAL BRUNEI

Accuser says bribe charge vs Puno of public interest

THE IMPEACHMENT COURT, which created Chief Justice Reynato Puno of taking a bribe on the basis of an anonymous e-mail, yesterday defended his action saying the report involved "public interest."

Lorin Binsuja, a petitioner in the consolidated cases questioning the ownership of Negros Oriental Rep. Jocelyn Limkaichong, spoke out after Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. criticized him for relying on e-mails to accuse Puno of receiving a P20-million bribe without any evidence.

"Senator Pimentel is entitled to his opinion and I respect that. But as the recipient of the two letters from a concerned employee of the Supreme Court, I have every right to react to the said letters and to inform them that the public ought to know, especially when they speak of anomalies in the court," Binamira said.

"I have no reason to doubt the contents of the first letter because the documents attached to it were authenticated and acknowledged by the Supreme Court to be genuine in its June 11, 2008, resolution," he said.

Binamira is the subject of contempt proceedings in the Supreme Court after he leaked to the media in December a copy of a purported court decision on the Limkaichong case signed by 14 justices, but which had yet to be promulgated by the full court.

Binamira raised suspicions that Puno may have tried to reverse the decision that said Limkaichong wasn't a Filipino and shouldn't hold an elective position.

Last week, Binamira said an e-mail presumably from the same Supreme Court employee alleged that the Chief Justice had received a bribe in connection with the case.

Binamira distributed copies of the e-mail to members of the media in a news conference yesterday at a restaurant across from the Court of Appeals.

"If you don't believe this you can ask around the hotels and corners of the Supreme Court and you will hear loud whispers," they said said.

Lawyer Jose Midas Marquez, Puno's chief of staff and spokesperson, has branded the new allegations raised by Binamira as lies.

"This was on the agenda [of the en banc] last week. The chief justice was in Egypt at the time. How could the chief justice influence Justice [Conchita] Carpio when they deliberated on this particular issue during that time?" Marquez said.

"They could no longer come up with any other allegations. They should stop those lies and we should stop listening to those lies," he added.

In a statement last week, Pimentel vouched for Puno's integrity as a magistrate.

"Mr. Binamira has no business handling about the anonymous letter unless he can present even a semblance of proof of the alleged bribery. Otherwise, he must answer for it as a terrible indictment that shakes the judicial system and is bad for the country," Pimentel said. Norman Bordadora

THE PRESIDENT RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD was presented recently to Dr. Tranquilino Ebcas Jr. (3rd from right) for his 33 years of dedicated medical service to the Filipino people. This was the first time the award was given out by the Magsaysay family. Others in photo are (from left) Daisy Ocampo, Dr. Celia T. Anolin, Venus Hilo Ebcas, Tranquilino Ram Ebcas III, former Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Milo Magsaysay Valenzuela.

Mindanao to get $73M from US for peace projects

DAVAO CITY—MINDANAO WILL receive another $73 million for poverty under the Mindanao Reconstruction and Development Assistance (Mirad) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), a Mindanao official said Friday.

Undersecretary Virgilio Leyretana, chair of the Mindanao Economic Development Council Bikolcos, said the fresh funds expected this year were part of USAID's $100-million commitment to the Midap.

Since the five-year program started in 2007, Leyretana said Mindanao had received $40 million for infrastructure projects aimed at propping up its economy.

"The program includes components such as Growth with Equity in Mindanao, Microenterprise Access to Banking Services, Credit Union Empowerment and Strengthening, Transparent and Accountable Governance, and the Strategic Justice System Initiatives Institutes for Peace," he said.

Leyretana said the projects were "for peace and reinvestment opportunities."

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Avelino Razon Jr. said the projects were vital to the government's peace efforts in Mindanao.

"We view these development projects as very vital in pursuit of that peace effort. The ongoing projects will complement the ongoing peace process," he said, referring to the negotiations between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

In Cotabato City, hundreds of small community-based projects on livelihood and self-sufficiency have been established in poor and ex-Muslim villages in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) since 2003, an official said.

Mustapha Sumbi-ulama, manager of the ARMM Social Social Fund Project (ASFP), said these seven 1,870 community-assisted projects related to microfinance, health and education, water and sanitation, transport, social services and food sufficiency completed in Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

"The good thing about these small infrastructure projects is that they are the urgent needs of the people and therefore community development is ensured that after funding support through outside loans and grants," Sumbi-ulama said.

He said that since 2003, the ASFP has availed itself of $5.3 billion in assistance from the World Bank and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica).

"The money was used to empower the impoverished ARMM communities through the implementation of various sub-projects sought by local dwellers," said Jocelyn Bautista, technical consultant chief of the Jica monitoring team in the ARMM.

Mustapha Benito, chair of the ARMM planning board's MIM project division, said the construction of the projects provided employment to the locals.

Among the ongoing projects are the rehabilitation of the Sulu provincial hospital at P93.5 million, a regional testing laboratory building at P9.6 million, and an agriculture and food testing center at P3.6 million.

ARMM Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan urged residents to help monitor the projects to ensure that they are completed on time. —Blue Arm and Ghio Ta Salvan, Inquirer Mindanao

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P20-B tourism investment to create 3,000 jobs–DOT

ABOUT 3,000 JOBS WILL BE CREATED with the P20-billion worth of investments in the tourism industry this year, the Department of Tourism (DOT) has said.

Noting that the agency was one of the sectors least battered by the global financial crisis, Tourism Secretary Joe Ramos said he hoped the investments would trickle down to other sectors.

"With this initial list of investments, the country is assured of a vibrant tourism industry, with bigger revenues and more jobs. And consequently, there will lead to developments in transportation and road infrastructure," Ramos said.

The projects are the Park Red and Brooklyn Hotel and Restaurant (40 rooms) in Iloilo City; Jagdhara Villa Resort, Sedona Villa Resort, Sedona(sic) Villa Hotel, Mercedesville Hotel Resort, La Galleo Villa Resort, Kapunganan Villa Resort, and La Pearville Villa Resort, Annapolis group in Pagudpud, Ilocos, Palawan (28 cluster villas); Oakwood Inn and Residences (252 rooms) in Pasig City; Imperial Palace Water Park Resort and Spa (636 rooms) in Cebu; and Shangri-La's Boracay Resort and Spa (25.7 rooms).

The projects, which have a total value of P20 billion, will provide 2,000 new rooms.

Set for launch in the months ahead are Dusit Thani Hotel and Residences

CNN hero teaches literacy with pushcart

From page A1

would to be featured as a heroes an ordinary individual with an extraordinary impact...each week.

Eduardo's victim of gangs when he was in high school, Bobadovits known by him) what poverty can do: Snatch children out of school and lead them to violence.

Born to a father who worked as a tricycle driver and to a mother who was a laundrywoman, he managed to finish college through the help of others.

Giving back

Through the guidance, Bobadovits is giving back. "I realized why I was created and I want to fulfill that mission," he said.

Bobadovits is referring to Dynamic Teen Company (DTC), which he and his classmates at Cavite National High School formed in August 1997.

The company began as a simple gathering of some 30 schoolmates as an alternative to the numerous teenager gangs which got involved in acts of that time.

But Bobadovits himself is surprised how DTC grew into a group that now has 2,000 active teenager members all over Cavite.

"We asked ourselves what caused the creation of gangs and we found out that most of their members are teenagers who live in the slums," he said.

In its early years, DTC visited children in the community where Bobadovits himself grew. The lowest dump.

More than empty stomachs

The group initially brought food for the children, getting funds from selling junks they collect, but the problem was more than just empty stomachs.

DTC started to grow and soon, members decided to start literacy classes every Saturday. To carry books and a blackboard, the group bought a bike with a sidecar.

But next to a slide, the first would see the end the classes fell off on high school senior Emanuel Ringal, the current president of DTC, proposed that the group use a pushcart instead.

Bobadovits agreed but to drop out of grade school. His parents had told him, being the middle child among three siblings, that he had to give way to his elder brother who was finishing high school.

But a community volunteer helped Bobadovits get a scholarship from the World Vision, a group which matches sponsors to needy children, when he was in Grade 5.

Thanks to his good grades, his sponsor from Australia agreed to finance his education until he finished a two-year diploma course on computer technology.

Club 8588, a volunteer group based in the city also helped Bobadovits in his studies and in settling up the DTC when he got here high school.

Calling

Being with street children short of the time, Bobadovits felt that his calling was to be a teacher. He went back to school and completed a degree in education in 2006.

He knew that he could earn more if he tried his luck working abroad. He now works as a high school teacher in a private school in nearby Bacoor town.

Although Bobadovits received his greatest gift when CNN aired its feature on him on his birthday on March 5, his parents were not able to watch the live broadcast and hit live interview with journalist Larry King. They did not have cable TV at home.

Bobadovits also knows he could give more if he earned more. The low-level and school supplies for the street children, DTC just depends on the contributions of its high school members for their fund-raising activities and donations.

But he said, "I have faith that the Lord will provide."

He may not have much money but he said the teenagers joining the DTC have their time and commitment to share.

At first, Bobadovits's family was not excited about his project. "You are just wasting your time," he recalled what his parents had told him.

He could have spent time studying or finding part-time jobs to help the family instead of serving other people.

But now, even his youngest sister Gracie Mae is a proud volunteer of DTC.

Lives touched

Bobadovits guarantees the success of the project not only by the enthusiasm of DTC members, who have pledged to spend their holidays teaching street children, but also by the young lives that the members touched but touched.

One of the children who attended the monthly sessions of the dump was Michael, who sniffed [illegible] and stole purses when he was 7. Now 16, Michael is now a volunteer of DTC.

He knows better and regrets the way he spent his childhood. He wants to make sure other children will not make the same mistakes again.

"I found my goal in life," Michael said.

Michael and the other members hold their sessions every Saturday. One group goes to the public markets and another goes to the dump in the morning. In the afternoon, a group goes to the cemetery.

About a hundred kids join each session and they are grouped according to age.

The volunteers not only teach street children how to read, write and count, but also proper hygiene. They would bathe some of the children and give them clothes. They also instill faith among them.

Change

"You are the change that you dream," Bobadovits would tell the teenagers who join DTC.

In a country where many things go wrong, he said, "We are the change that we seek."

The podcast and the teenagers behind them have been reaping recognition, too. In 2006, DTC was cited as among the 10 accomplished youth organizations in the Philippines.

If the attention he and DTC have been getting makes Bobadovits happy, it is because of the opportunity it inspires others.

"I hope other youth organizations will have their own pushcarts in other parts of the country," he said.

Many children still need guidance and help, Bobadovits said. This was the reason the DTC had just built its second wooden pushcart.

(To know more about the group or how you can help, visit its website at www.dynamicteencompany.org.)

LITERACY class in session at the Mendiguang Commons cemetery in Cavite City

Mancao to Lacson: 'Sleep soundly, sir'

Front page A1

the purported phone conversation was the issue in his efforts to banter down allegations that he was involved in the November 2000 double killing of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Enaje and the latter's driver, Emmanuel Corbito.

In an affidavit he executed in the United States in February, Mancao claimed that he overheard Lacson order a trusted aide, former Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, to kill Enaje and that Lacson also ordered Mancao (Mancao) to renew up police involvement in the twin slayings.

Lacson told the hearings that Mancao also sensed him in their January 2008 talk that he would not give in to suspect allies ready to bite by a witness deal in exchange for implicating the senator in the Enaje-Corbito case.

Text message

Lacson forwarded to the hearing what he said was Mancao's text message to him dated Feb. 4 last year showing the supposed pressure being brought to bear on Mancao to drag Lacson into the case.

"Sir eye sir" (the text message said, "I was hoping I can overthrow something I hoped is in the end. Best moment of my life, sir). I will doubt the interpretation. Sleep soundly sir."

At that time, Mancao was a free man and living in Florida. He is now set to be extradited from the United States so he could face the double murder case in the Philippines.

Lacson said Mancao's text message to him was prompted by a phone conversation they had that same day.

Try with the gov't

The senator said Mancao had called him to tell him that the military intelligence chief, Brig. Gen. Romeo Poquiz, had offered to relocate him to the police force to enable his family in Singapore in exchange for implicating Lacson in the murders.

Lacson said that at one point in the conversation, Mancao suggested that he would try with the government but later he would find out that the case would blow upon its face.

He said he advised Mancao against doing it, telling him to stick to the truth that they had nothing to do with the murders.

He said Mancao apparently sensed his adviser because he texted him later with the message that he would not give in to the supposed offer made to him.

Asked if "Salvador" meant then Mancao would implicate him first, Lacson said: "Yes, that was how I understood it when Mancao said that."

Asked why he had kept Mancao's text message for more than a year and sprung it only now, Lacson said: "I kept it in the hidden treasure of my cell phone thinking I might be able to confront Pacoma with it when he faces the Commission on Appointments for his confirmation as the next head."

Lacson said the last time he cited to find out what had happened to Mancao was when he called Mancao's wife, Marlene on Jan. 23 this year.

He said he merely asked what happened to the extradition hearing of Mancao but was told by Marlene that it was postponed.

"Marlene told me that her husband did not want their children brought to jail and that he was crying," Lacson said.

Lacson maintained that Mancao was pressured to execute the affidavit.

In text message later yesterday, Lacson said the hearings that he had not intended to use Mancao's Jan. 4, 2009, text message "against his (senator)."

"But I am compelled to bring it out in order to counter other issues that have taken advantage of his predicament and his weakness to use him against me," he explained.

"I paint out that a friend and a former subordinate has turned against me even to a point of sacrificing the truth," Lacson said.

Aatoc Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said the case against those involved in the Enaje-Corbito murders remained strong despite the refusal of a former policeman who had worked for Lacson as a driver to back up Mancao's affidavit.

No difference

Gonzalez said former Sgt. Reynaldo Dalmacio's statement seemingly refuting Mancao's claim that he was riding with Lacson in the car when he heard Lacson order Enaje's killing would not affect the justice department's case.

"It would be good if (Dalmacio) would cooperate but if he will not, there is no difference," Gonzalez said on the phone. "As far as I'm concerned the case remains strong."

Mancao said in his affidavit that he was in the front passenger seat of Lacson's car when the then Philippine National Police chief gave the order to Aquino while the cars were idling at the bank.

Dalmacio said at the weekend that he did not recall Mancao ever issuing beside him the car and he did not recall the conversation that Mancao claimed to have heard.

NBI empty-handed

The National Bureau of Investigation team sent to the United States to fetch former police Supt. Glenn Dumlao is coming home empty-handed.

Lawyer Ric Diaz, chief of the NBI anticorruption division, told the Senate that he had received information that the hearing on Dumlao's court petition questioning his extradition would not be heard until this week.

"The (NBI central office) advised us to come home," Diaz said by telephone from the United States where a team of agents had been waiting to pick up Dumlao as early as last week.

Dumlao has executed statements supposedly jiving with Mancao's affidavit.

Dumlao's petition for his extradition a few days before his scheduled return to the country, saying US authorities should release him after holding him for more than 60 days supposedly in violation of the rules on extradition.

"Definitely, (Mancao) would come home before Dumlao does," Diaz said, suggesting Dumlao's petition would take some time to be resolved.

Ping preparing 'bigger' exposé

SEN. PANFILO LACSON YESterday said a new exposé he was preparing against the Arroyo administration was "bigger" than previous ones he had made that included the alleged "Jose Pidal" bank accounts of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and the national broadband network controversy.

"I am just putting the finishing touches," Lacson said, clarifying his latest exposé was not about an alleged nonexistent infrastructure project, as reported by the latter the other day.

The senator did not want to give any details, saying that he was at the stage of completing his documents.

He said he did not know whether he would be able under the report in time for the resumption of Congress' session on April 13 after a month-long break.

Maintaining was seeming ly endorsed by Lacson's claims of another exposé.

"We just hope that those things that he's doing are not made tactics so he could avoid facing these serious allegations of murder against him," Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said on Radyo ng Bayan.

Lacson earlier accused the administration of evolving the Enaje-Corbito case to keep him from making media exposé against it. *Reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Christian F. Esguerra*

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OPINION

Negotiating Blair

EDITORIAL

IT SOUNDED LIKE A GOOD IDEA. MAYBE MALACañang can create an Eminent Persons Group to serve as an advisory council in the peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and include former British Prime Minister Tony Blair (and former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan too) in it. The eminent persons' experience in crafting peace treaties and implementing peace agreements should prove useful to the Mindanao peace process.

"That is why we have proposed that Tony Blair and Kofi Annan be invited as advisers and facilitators. But this will have to be discussed and agreed on. If the MILF agrees, then it will happen," Avelino Razon, the former chief of the Philippine National Police and current presidential adviser on the peace process, said in a forum the other day.

That, at least, is the shape of the idea.

Blair, who is in the country on a speaking tour, seems especially suited to serve as peace adviser. He is deeply engaged in the search for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, having accepted an appointment, on the same day he retired as prime minister in 2007, to serve as Envoy of the Quartet, representing the United Nations, the European Union, the United States and Russia in the Middle East peace process. Blair's personal involvement in the negotiations that led to the so-called Good Friday Agreement and his almost obsessive interest in the Northern Ireland peace process also form part of his political legacy; despite the latent spates of terrorism, the peace agreement he helped put together so soon after assuming the prime ministership has held, by and large, for over a decade.

The problem with the idea becomes apparent only after we peruse the qualities and issues it entails or creates.

In the first place, the idea of inviting Blair and Annan emerged as a reaction to an MILF condition that foreign parties enter the peace negotiations as guarantors. In other words, the main of the peace table, stalled yet again after the controversial Memorandum of Agreement on ancestral domain was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, is such that the MILF is calling for outside parties to guarantee good faith.

This new demand, as Razon himself characterized it, deserves closer scrutiny, because as it is, foreign parties are already and heavily involved in the Mindanao peace process. Malaysia is a broker of the talks; troops from Malaysia, Brunei and Libya (as well as a civilian expert from Japan) have served on the International Monitoring Team; the Organization of the Islamic Conference remains a pivotal source of influence. What would the addition of eminent persons from, say, the United Kingdom or the United Nations organization do that other foreign parties avidly interested in a lasting peace agreement in Mindanao cannot or are unable to do?

Seen in this light, the MILF "demand" is nothing less than a signal of the Arroyo administration's utter lack of credibility at the negotiating table. Having played with constitutional fire in the ancestral domain issue, the administration now suffers the inevitable consequence. Its partners across the badly burned table are deeply wary of the administration.

To be sure, this is not the first time that the MILF, despite the serious engagement of Malaysia and other allies in the peace process, called for greater international involvement. When MILF founder Hashim Salamat was still alive, he too wanted the United States to enter the negotiations and play the barest broker. (Whether the United States has in fact done that, through its apparent support of the since-junked MOA, is the subject of much, productive, speculation.)

While we are aware of the often salutary impact of US aid on Mindanao peace projects (such as the reintegration of former Moro National Liberation Front regulars), we do not see a role for the United States to play, directly, in the negotiations.

That, if the latest MILF condition is part of this old thinking, we can only surmise that the Moro separatist movement wants the peace talks to rest a higher profile on the international stage. That would mean it wants the government to hire Blair or Annan or other eminent persons, not for their advice, but for the publicity.

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Why did Nicole recant?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

NOW THAT EVERYBODY IS SPECULATING on why Nicole made her recantation, I might as well jump in.

Nicole did not write that affidavit; a lawyer did. It is too well written, too neat; it puts everything together in too reasonable doubt in the rape case against Daniel Smith. Only a lawyer could have done it. Most likely Nicole merely signed it.

Who was that lawyer, then? Well, definitely, it was not Nicole's lawyer, Evalyn Ermac. Nicole had just dismissed her.

Who fired Whom? It was, he did a good [?] job of trying to have Smith criminally acquitted based on reasonable doubt. It looks like the work of a defense lawyer. He did not do it for Nicole, nor in the interest of justice. He did it for Smith. And Nicole signed it in the office of Smith's lawyers. In their presence, no doubt.

Why did Nicole sign it after rendering a grueling trial and trying so hard to have Smith convicted? Most money? Possible, but not likely. A US visa, a job in the US, even the promise of American citizenship later? More probable. So many Filipinos, a US visa and Manila are all Jennifer Laude is like going to heaven. But if her new American boyfriend wants to go to court to see her mother dusted, then she would have become a US citizen without even trying. That would be the ruination of all her dollar-dollar signs, so sending to her mother. That she can petition for her mother and the rest of her family in some to God bless America and they will all live there happily ever after. It is nothing less than a fairy tale come true for many poor Filipina families, better than winning the jackpot in the lotto.

But would that have sufficient reason for acquittal of Smith? It being a legal question, incredibly there would be many conflicting legal opinions about it. (Put 10 lawyers together and there will be 11 different opinions or one single legal opinion. Yet they all studied the same laws in school, so why do they have different opinions?)

Not one Sen. Justice Enrique and DP law professor Harry Roque said that since the affidavit was not presented during the 2006 trial and was never identified and attested to by Nicole, "it is just a mere scrap of paper." They said the Court of Appeals now considering Smith's appeal should treat it as a scrap of paper and throw it where it belongs—the wastebasket.

"Under the law, no evidence applicable in the Philippines and the United States," Roque and Roque added, "an affidavit is hearsay unless the other party is accorded the right to cross-examine the affiant."

Both Prosecutor Raoul Creencia-Valdez said "the evidence is already there. What transpired during the trial would be the basis for the CA's deliberations."

Judge Benjamin Pozon, the Makati trial court judge who convicted Smith, said Nicole's recantation would not necessarily lead to Smith's acquittal. He explained that "in general court procedures, a retraction made by a complainant in a criminal case would not automatically cause the appellate court to reverse the ruling made by a lower court."

Pozon said: "I doubt if the court will just believe the recantation ... But if the court has doubts on the case, the circumstance would just confirm the court's doubt in the sincerity of the complainant."

In practice, members of the CA "review all the statements of witnesses and the evidence presented by the prosecution and defense during the trial in the lower court," Pozon said. "Rape is just a complaining witness, he added. "there may be other grounds that the court will still consider in its [evaluation] of the case."

But Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that the appellate court taking judicial cognizance of Nicole's recantation might become a threat in the case. The court may be persuaded to reopen the trial for admission of new evidence, he said.

As I see it, considering the realities, Smith's conviction will eventually be reversed. After all, it is the great, mighty America versus a little dot-poor country like the Philippines that looks upon Uncle Sam for leadership and even little help it needs, where a mere telephone call by its President sends our wars little President and her whole government into a tizzy. There would be discreet pressure on the President, the Court of Appeals, and even the Supreme Court if the case reaches it, and they will all realize that the quality of mercy is not restrained when it is Uncle Sam asking for it. After all, dumi-you pity a young patriotic American soldier ready to give his life for his country wrongly convicted of rape when he only intended the two friendly arms term of Nicole as an invitation to arm?

Will Nicole's flight to the US result in a review or even renegotiation of the Visiting Forces Agreement? Not likely under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo. One call from Obama and she would come running and torpedo any review. But when there is a change of presidency, it might. Let us look at the lessons of the past.

During the administration of GMA's father, President Diosdado Macapagal, the uproar relating to death of a Balagtas tribesman in Clark Air Base led to a series of stories by a small all-news newspaper, The Evening News, which called for a renegotiation of the RP-US Military Bases Agreement. Macapagal initially played deaf and dumb but when the story got newspaper-wide up the chance and two more Filipino fatalities were shot dead by American servicemen, this time in Subic. Macapagal was left with no choice but to renegotiate the bases treaty. That led to the new treaty that was later signed by then Senate leader Lorenzo Tañada as Senate president, and the Americans had to leave all their bases in the Philippines.

So don't discount a young girl like Nicole abused by an American serving reconnaissance like the VFA.

A fate worse than rape

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE ARE IN FACT THREE RAPES HERE. The first one is the rape of Nicole.

Is that still true after Nicole recanted?

But of course. Lucas Lacquis has a point about the examination being shot full of holes. To begin with, why on earth should Nicole wish to volunteer to the country of birth of the man she accused of raping her? And whom she has just now cleared of the crime?

Then, there are those other unanswered questions: How did she manage to get a visa from the US Embassy? And next, why aren't they virtually saying her story is so special for having brought false charges against one of their own, impugning the integrity of the US armed forces in the country, in order that it or Duke could escape consequence, subverting the line about the VFA being more benign than the US bases?

Nope, they just bought her. Lock, stock and barrel. Or body and soul and everything else in between. What's more, they just bought her cheap. Ten thousand dollars, isn't that it? A green card, perfect misery and a pass blasted out in a strange new world the way the rest of her country has been blasted out of the memory of its inhabitants, giving them to live in a strange and alien world.

But the rest of us, of course, it remains a tragedy. As friends of mine say, they didn't just rape her; they ruined her too, a conviction. The first without her consent, the second complete by with it.

Nicole's unwarranted notwithstanding, says Nene Pimentel, it shouldn't be a reason for the senators tossing around in their beds to review the VFA. A sentiment shared by Edu Manzano who filed a bill in February calling for the termination of the VFA. He deserves praise for it.

That is the second rape. Long before Nicole, Jeang Soares was raped by Mr. Smith, the guy who went to Washington, to the form of the VFA, flatly had Jeang Soares enjoyed her unrehearsed responsibility, having just recovered from the gruelling first rape of the US bases, then found the VFA on top of her. And, as with the US bases, with the Philippine government pimping for it.

In that rape too, real and present as well? Yes. The frenetic activities of the Americans in Mindanao show it beyond a shadow of doubt. The VFA in fact is worse than the US bases. It is the one thing that has allowed the US to subvert Philippine sovereignty by rekindling and fanning the secessionist ambitions of the Moros. The Bangsamoro Republic he has reflects the Moros' aspirations than it does their American patrons' contemplations. What was Ernie Baron doing in Kuala Lumpur last year, eager to see the MOA signed?

The VFA should be terminated posthaste, with or without Enrile's. It has already done tremendous harm to the country's IR course in this case, the continuing rape of Jeang Soares is being done courtesy of the Supreme Court. Make no bones about it, that is Regalo's time, the current service provides executing a lie steeper price than her predecessor did, which is nothing less than her survival.

That brings me to the third rape, which is no less true, real and possible despite being a lie. Its key victim.

I don't know that I can bring myself to judge Nicole too harshly. Of course I hear the cries of anger and distress from a public that feels raw and disenfranchised. Of course I hear the sweeping and pronging of levels of the people who took up the cudgels for her, defending her as much in the court of public opinion as in the court of law, when the other side took care to depict her as a woman who did not need concerning to just suit her virtue, or whatever else she had left to part with. Of course I hear the lamentations and vituperations of the women's groups that refused to step until they raised the country, in mind too numb to not hear yet another tragedy and wanting only to lull into the embrace of sleep, into unlistful, turn, to the prince to bring redress by rolling-call-and-order.

By why should Nicole choose the heroic path, or just the honorable one, when there is nothing in this country to support that choice? Everywhere there is corruption, subversion, cheating, lying, stealing, murder, rape, looking out for oneself, dog eating dog, every man, or woman, for himself/herself, the devil take the hindmost. Of course there is the example set by people like her friends who have taken the honorable and heroic path amid the greatest adversity. But they are the exception rather than the rule, the exception to prove the rule. That example shows that in this society the wicked are rewarded plentifully and the good are punished harshly. Why should Nicole, who has endured the burdens of the world, want to court misery?

Of course she had responsibilities, having become the symbol of purloined honor, or outraged debasement, but she has an example there too. No one has been more responsibilities than the person currently occupying Malacañang, and shirking them—she, certainly, has not learned her lesson. It has benefited her. A society has a right to expect decent choices from its citizens only when it can enforce decency. A society has the right to expect moral choices from its citizens only when it can enforce morality. A society has the right to expect its citizens to routinely do the right thing only when it can routinely reward the right thing and punish the wrong one. That is not true here. The opposite is true here.

That is the worst rape of all, the brutal, savage and vicious attack on the country that has left it not just deported but deprayed, that has made its inhabitants choose not the bloody path of justice but the gutted path of prostitution.

Juan de la Cruz has been enslaved several times over. He is mind and soul not just on the body. He is mind and not just in the body. That's bad. That's not just rape. That's a fate worse than rape.

The redistricting game

SOUNDING BOARD
Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

THERE IS ON THE INTERNET AN ONLINE GAME called "The Redistricting Game." It plays around with the apportionment of representative districts. The introduction to the game says: "It is not easy to make the redistricting process nonpartisan—and none whatsoever to be able to do so in a highly entertaining way. But that is just what The Redistricting Game does. It's a game in the grand style of all who want Americans to understand how the process is working, and why it needs real reform."

What started it all? It apparently was born out of exasperation. "The polarization and pettiness accompanying the last federal and 2/3 of state redistricting [for the past two decades or more can be traced—in large part—to the manner in which district lines are drawn in most states."

The game is being played in real life these days in my own Congress. Under discussion is the proposal to change the system by which districts are a number of bills seeking to create new representative districts. My impression is that the bills are being discussed in a "poisonous atmosphere"—and all under the inspiration of the belief that this gladiator is the only means to survive in politics. Other gladiators will fight that the exercise is letting done in favor that or that party or even that or that person and that it is being done in utter violation of constitutional provisions on the subject.

For the first time, the rules are being discussed under the constitution and some legalia are weighing are struggling to understand them. Remember, too, that it, those who stand to lose if the bills are passed, are getting excited.

What are the current rules?

First, there is a flexible limit on the number of representative districts. "The House of Representatives shall be composed of not more than two hundred and fifty members, unless otherwise fixed by law..."

The 1986 Constitutional Commission through an Ordinance appended to the Constitution initially divided the country into districts. Population movements, however, can change the size of legislative districts. For this reason, Congress is commanded to make a reapportionment of legislative districts within three years following the return of every census.

We do not have 250 now, but the number can be increased if Congress considers more representative districts necessary, e.g., by dividing large representative districts into two or more or by creating new provinces.

The second rule is that, "Each city with a population of at least two hundred fifty thousand, or each province, shall have at least one representative."

What this means is that a population of 250,000 is the minimum number needed to constitute a representative district. However, a province, no matter how small the size, should have at least one representative district.

Third, in reapportioning representative districts according to their inhabitants, the districts "must be on the basis of a uniform and progressive ratio. This is called the principle of proportional representation which is intended to be sure that as much as possible the vote of one person is of the same weight as the vote of any other.

Fourth, "Each legislative district shall comprise, as far as practicable, contiguous, compact, and adjacent territory." This is the rule against "gerrymandering." Gerrymandering is a dishonest manipulation of the boundaries of congressional districts to favor a candidate. The word is a compound of salamander and "Gerry," the name of the American politician who crafted a district in the shape of a salamander (science himself).

Finally, aside from the district representatives, during the party-list representation's after-count, 20 percent of whatever the number of district representatives there are. In other words, the number of party-list representatives will always depend on the number of district representatives at any given time. A controversial formula for computing this was fixed in a decision of the Supreme Court in 2000.

There are two principal issues being debated in Congress. First, is the minimum population needed to justify the creation of a new district? What seems to be confusing this issue is the claim that when Makati City was divided into two legislative districts, the 1986 census report indicated that the population of Makati stood only at 450,000. The Court rejected the claim in the body of its 1995 decision upholding the division of Makati. However, a footnote to the same decision said that records of the National Statistics Office and the records of the Commission on Elections indicated something might justify departure from the rule of contiguity. Similarly different small islands separated by water can form one representative district.

Whether a narrower rule can ensure for our constituent a local version of "The Redistricting Game"?

The legacy begins

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO
Antonio J. Montalvan II

THE HUMANAU WEITED WRONG PENCHANT is in no entity about Mindanao is often laced with difficulties. For one, it is oftentimes exasperating to educate a nation that has grown accustomed to generalizing to think of Mindanao as the backdrop. Backdrop resonates with being backward, never mind if the reality isn't so. That backdrop image is shaped by our metropolitan realities where it is Manila that speaks for the rest of the country, never mind if it is skewed, and never mind if it is merely ignorant of what lies outside it. And I am talking not only of government, for Manila contains a cultural.

The world has become smaller—but it may take some time for Manila to lose its claim that it is the center and the way it is. Maybe it will take some time before we taste the dates of being the center is also a date of dominion. But there are those who do not see themselves as lying on the fringes of the center, and who do not believe that the center always gets it straightened. What they have done is to establish a counter-center to demolish the perceived hegemony.

Nowhere is this truer than in the great Filipino literati scholar Miguel A. Bernad. Even Manila's assessment of his death was very true to form. It was characteristically relegated to the margins, dwarfed by the words of what is pop and hip-hop in Filipino culture. Aniel Pineda and garden soy examples. Pineda fit all better than Bernad, the author of the book, a Pambansang Bhdad of Sheet was even in order.

If this may sound offensive to the fans of Aniel Pineda and Francis M, I am not about to scale them and say that those pop stars are dust from gold or circus from diamonds. But certainly we had one nationally cultural celebration question if we can't say, pop, hip-hop, garden soy, the Filipino cultural celebration question is the Filipino and through literature or history. These two are part of our greatest intangibles, but those who listen in their fields are regarded as dust and

simon.

Bernad became a national institution in Filipino literature and history not by writing from Manila but from the Mindanao of his birth. His weekly pronouncements on the opinion page of a national daily did not only write from the center but from the margins. Yet he addressed the center often to demolish its self-justification. He was the type who would be irked by news stories that say "there was a fire in Mindanao last night," the kind that was Mindanao as a tiny speck because that is how Manila thinks of it.

Bernad was born in 1909 when there were very few Filipino writers. He literally grew up with the progress and development of religious literature. He was then as a teenage poet to judge in maturity. That was one of his unique attributes as a writer. The first taboo he believed that Filipino literature was no longer emotional, writers picked up the pronouncement and repeated it to the heedless ears.

In a teacher and writer, his writing production was prolific. Very recently, at 91, he launched two books, one by a non-university press whose infancy he had helped form. He had also launched two books in 2004, one of which was probably his valedictory of Mindanao, which he called "The Land Beloved." (This was also the title of one of his books.)

Bernad made history come alive. Whether literary or historiographic, his writings were often somehow synergistic infused with so much

autobiographic value. I cannot imagine a Bernad historiography used as fodder for the memorization of dates and names that we accustom our basic education students to. That would be missing the whole point of Bernad's version of Philippine history.

A citizen of the world (for he had seen much of the world), he was also a first-class citizen whose special love was the nation of his birth and the history of the land it inherited. Guided always by this as his mission, he could afford to write scathing remarks because the reader immediately sensed the ideal that he wished to put across. Even in his interior, his sense of current events as new and as fresh as those happened. I wrote once that to Bernad's writings, one sees how the present is the beginning of the Lord in history, yet without sounding preachy or magisterial.

If William Faulkner were alive, he would have celebrated Bernad. Speaking at the pinnacle of his acclaim when he received the 1950 Nobel Prize in Stockholm, Faulkner had lamented the decline of man and issued this dictum to those who would write: write from the ghetto and not from the spirit.

Many friends had thought I was in mourning over the death of a friend. I was, but to a greater extent, I was celebrating it. What Bernad did in the Filipino nation had every reason to be celebrated. A new mind if history is inaugurated, he eliminated and never mind if he was not even recognized by the official republic. Because from heaven, we will have to live with the Bernad legacy and then sooner or later realize what giant contributions he had made in the cause of God and Filipino culture.

Bernad's passion tells us that the day of death is better than the day of birth. How absolutely true this was with Miguel Bernad.

+++

Comments to montal@mc.edu.ph

Getting even

THE LONG VIEW
Manuel L. Quezon III

ACCORDING TO A CONGRESSMAN I ASKED about the prospects of Charter change, the campaign for amendments is dead. The Speaker, according to the representative, told his colleagues that any changes proposed—and up—amendments—couldn't apply to themselves, to make the whole thing acceptable to the public. When they heard this, the Speaker's fellow congressmen expressed not only disgust, but that they'd immediately drop all interest in amendments.

Whether that story's true or a trumped-up chestnut, only time—my favorite wisdom figure—will tell. I think a messaging, though, is that after years of living on the defensive, the Palace is now on the offensive. It has taken the measure of its enemies and found them wanting. And while conventional wisdom has it that time is running out for the administration, it may just be that the window of opportunity is wider than conventional wisdom dictates.

That conventional wisdom says that if Charter change isn't accomplished by June, when the current second session of the 14th Congress draws to a close, the President and her people will have to resign themselves to making an accommodation with a successor, as she becomes a lame duck. Her lame duck status would be inaugurated by her July State of the Nation Address (under her present term, her last). She'd secure lame-duckhood by not running for anything, by not endorsing anyone, and by not being the beneficiary of opportunity's

Hurray for real policemen

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD HAS LONG BEEN pestered by on-and-off boisterous motorcycle street drinking and noisy talking sessions in front of a computer playhouse (can not-so-) near ours.

These last few days, however, the nightcrawlers and disturbance simmered down. Thanks to Barangay Bahay Toro's police community precinct (Station 3, Quezon City Police District) under the command of Senior Insp. Reynaldo Z. Medina, from whom we sought assistance. Special mention goes to Sgt. Danilo Ramos whom Senior Insp. Medina assigned to handle and resolve our complaints.

In this regard, I and my journalist husband and our neighbors would like to commend Barangay Toro's police community precinct for a job well done. Their quick action on our complaint, no doubt, has enhanced the image of "Manila at Ming Palo" as guardian of the peace; in the same time, it gave meaning and credence to the PNP hierarchy's *kumbinsa, hindi abusuhan* policy.

We are hopeful that Bahay Toro's police community precinct will remain vigilant, continue its nightly patrol and strictly enforce the necessary laws and ordinances—to prevent noisy and rowdy street drinking from happening in our neighborhood again.

—RHODORA MAGPOC
member, Laguna Tagapamayapa, Barangay Bahay Toro, QC

LETTERS

Praying for journalists

I AM JUST 60 ORDINARY FILIPINO CITIZEN who reads the Inquirer regularly. When I read Conor Sison's March 12 column ("So sue us"), I muttered a simple prayer to God, thinking: Time thus, journalists like him and those in the Inquirer editor still exist in our country.

I pray that they will all be blessed with God's protection all the days of their lives, and be blessed with more wisdom and strength to continue upholding the truth.

—GLORIA O. BALLO

Neri answered SSS retiree's letter

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO THE letter of Amado Cabrera titled "Is first of SSS hiding something again?" (Inquirer, 2/17/09).

Cabrera said Social Security System president and chief executive officer Romulo Neri failed to reply to the letters he sent last Nov. 6, 2008, Jan. 23, 2009 and Feb. 16, 2009. The letters sought to confirm whether the SSS received the full amount of P17.3 billion for the 100 million centavos Equitable PCIBank shares it sold to SM Investments Corp. (SMIC), which is Henry de Ocs's parent firm.

He said: "Sy to this late date, Neri has not answered my letters. Is he using executive privilege again to hide some dark secrets about the deal, if any?"

What are Cabrera's questions?

He wants clarification on the

Across the NATION

LGUs score bills exempting telecoms from local taxes

By Philip C. Tubeza

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS (LGUs) across the country are up in arms over moves in Congress that would exempt telecommunication service providers from paying local franchise taxes that run up to millions of pesos, a senior lawmaker said yesterday.

Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza said various local government leagues are now preparing "harshly worded position papers" and are starting to campaign against members of the House and the Senate who would vote for the proposed law bills to exempt the telecom firms.

"We've been managing with complaints from local governments, vehemently protesting the move to eliminate in a big way the 17-year-old Local Government Code and totally free telecommunication firms from paying all local taxes," Plaza said in a statement.

The lawmaker warned that the bills would "seriously deplete local governments of considerable current revenue, and imperil the delivery of critical public services, including the operations of provincial hospitals, city colleges and municipal high schools."

Plaza said these bills included House Bill No. 5847, amending the franchise of Bharatiya Telekomm Inc., renamed Smart Broadband Inc.; HB No. 5755, amending the franchise of Philippine Telephone Corp.; HB No. 5754, amending the franchise of Smart Communications Inc.; HB No. 5750, amending the franchise of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.; and HB No. 5756, amending the franchise of Connectivity Unlimited Resources Enterprise Inc.

Plaza said these bills proposed only one common amendment to the franchises of the firms, explicitly releasing them from "all taxes, duties and charges of any kind or manner, levied or collected by any authority whatsoever, whether national or local," except real property, value-added, and corporate income taxes.

Once approved, the bills would disapprove the Local Government Code provision that empowers provinces, cities and municipalities to collect local franchise taxes of up to 0.75 percent (three-fourths of one percent) on the gross receipts of telecommunication firms and other utilities in their jurisdictions, Plaza said.

According to the Provincial and City Treasurers Associations, each huge city or province now generates every year at least P400 million in local franchise taxes from telecommunication firms and other utilities, he said.

The associations cited the case of Quezon City, which earns annually some P200 million in local franchise taxes from just six firms—PLDT Smart, Globe Telecom Inc., Manila Electric Co., Maynilad Water Services Inc. and Manila Water Co., Plaza added.

He said the Supreme Court had consistently upheld the authority of cities to collect local franchise taxes. In separate cases, the Court had previously ordered Smart to pay local franchise taxes to the cities of Cebu, Davao and Iloilo.

"The high court stressed that any tax immunities claimed by franchised entities 'should be expressly provided, and not merely implied in their legislative concessions,' as in the case of Smart and other telecommunications firms, Plaza said.

TRAVEL THE WORLD (IN A WHEELCHAIR)

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Farmers air woes over stalled irrigation project

LEGAZPI CITY—SOLONS FOR FARMERS in Albay are worried over the non-implementation of an irrigation support project that would provide water to some 338 hectares of rice land in the town dubbed as the rice granary of Albay.

More than eight months and three (nine) bidding after President Macapagal-Arroyo released P94 million in June 2008 for the repair/reconstruction of the irrigation canals, the South Quirubo Irrigators Association Inc. (SQIAI), to which the 600 farmers belong, has sought the help of councilors to intercede with the National Irrigation Administration.

Nicholas Rodio, SQIAI president, on Wednesday provided the Albay media with copies of the resolution calling on the NIA in Bicol to immediately implement the irrigation support project.

Rodio said that on May 8 last year they submitted a resolution, seeking funding assistance for the support project, to Ms Arroyo who was then visiting this town.

Rodio said the SQIAI officials have no information of any reason for the NIA not to implement the project and complete it in time for the 2009 wet planting season.

Farmers in the barangays of Quinalbon, Upao, San Pierre, Bambod and part of Bulan are willing to participate in the repair works while they are not busy in their rice fields, said Rodio, who was chosen the 2007 Bicol Outstanding Agrarian Reform Beneficiary in Bikol and subsequently placed first runner-up in the national selection.

The SQIAI has 1,226 farmer-members tilling 1,336 ha of rice fields in nine barangays in Guinobatan and Oas.

Eugene Bailey, Irrigation Southern Luzon

"ITUMBA SI PING."

Ito ngayon ang sigaw ng mga sakim at makapangyarihang magnanakaw. Gagawin nila ang lahat para SIRAAN, TAKUTIN, O PATAHIMIKIN si Senador Ping Lacson sa kanyang laban kontra korapsyon.

Kung anu-ano ang paratang sa kanya para matakpan ang sarili nilang katiwalian.

KUNG MAY KASALANAN SI PING NA AYAW NIYANG MABULGAR, DAPAT SANA TAKOT SIYANG MAGSIWALAT NG KORAPSYON NG MAKAPANGYARIHAN. BAKIT PATULOY ANG KANYANG PAG-EXPOSE SA MGA CORRUPT?

Suriin natin. Sino nga lang ba sa simula't sapul ang hindi natitinag sa paghadlang sa pagnanakaw sa kaban ng bayan?

Matapang man si Ping, hindi niya kayang labanan nang mag-isa ang mga corrupt. Tulungan natin siya.

Kapit-bisig tayo para ipaglaban ang tama at ituwid ang mali. Bawat katiwalian na mapigil ay isang malaking tulong sa bayan.

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Ex-NPA members can join AFP, says officer

LUCENA CITY—FORMER NEW PEOPLE'S Army rebels who will surrender to the government can join the Armed Forces of the Philippines, according to the Southern Luzon Command (Solcom) chief.

"A former NPA rebel in the AFP is not impossible. They can recite. We will welcome them in the ranks," Lt. Gen. Delfin Bangit told newsmen during a social integration program ceremony of 35 rebel returnees from Quezon and Mauriburgan on Friday at the Quezon Sectoral Agricultural School in Pagbilao town.

Bangit explained that the reintegration process could only start after the full completion of the "social integration process" of the rebel returnees.

In the government's social integration program, former rebels and their dependents are given a set of assistance to facilitate their integration into the mainstream of society.

Integrating former rebels into the military is not a new practice, Bangit said.

"In fact, we have had several of them already integrated in the military," he said. "Once they have undergone the actual integration process, they are as qualified as the other citizens of the country."

Applications of those interested will be processed by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

Several former NPA members have enlisted to surrender their duties to join the Army to help the government forces defeat the communist insurgents who have been waging war against the government for the past 40 years to establish a Maoist state.

"We can contribute a lot to the government's antiinsurgency campaign. We know the terrain of the NPA territories that roads. We know their tactics and strategies very well," a former rebel operating in the Bicolno Peninsula for ten years told the Inquirer.

A staff member of the OPAPP requested the media not to reveal the names of the rebels.

"They (NPA rebels) shunned not only me from but also those of I see families. The communist ideology is the real cause of the people's sufferings," said a former rebel.

Another, however, avowed that his wish is to join the Army was not motivated by revenge.

"I pity our comrades who are still in the boondocks fighting for a lost cause. I want to help enlighten the public in several public forums where I can share my experience as a former cadre and expose the evils of communist ideology," he said.

Bangit said the state's former enemies in the battlefields could be of better help to the government such as combatants but as resource persons to educate the public, especially those living in remote areas, about "the true intentions of the communist ideology."

"The widest framework of intel is enough. We should all help the rebel returnees get rid of war mentality," Bangit said.

The rebel returnees will play the primary role of enlightening the people on the "true conspiracy," he said.

Each of them received ₱50,000 worth of livelihood assistance from the government after two weeks of livelihood training program to help them start a new life. Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

> Applications of those interested would be processed by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

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Senate to probe power rate increase in Visayas

NEWSBRIEFS

■ KIDAPAWAN CITY

NPA rebs burn firm's truck

ARMED men burned a dozen spray trucks owned by a banana company in Magpet town in North Cotabato on Thursday morning.

Magpet Mayor Vilma Piñol said armed men who identified themselves as New People's Army rebels held and burned a dozen spray trucks owned by Japanese banana firm Sumitomo Corp., an exporter of Cavendish banana operating in North Cotabato and other parts of Mindanao.

Piñol said police were eyeing extortion as motive behind the incident. Last week, arsonists also burned a bulk low unit of the Sumitomo.

Dale Aguinan, Inquirer Mindanao

■ LUCBAZON CITY

Janitor killed in mishap

A JANITOR of the Air Transport Office, who was riding on a bicycle on his way to work, was killed when a van driven by a police officer bumped him early Friday in Daraga town in Albay, police said.

Florante Lerma, 63, of Sabsaban St., Dyslip, Manito Subdivision, was declared dead on arrival at the hospital, police investigator Eric Lumbao said. Lucero's bicycle was hit by the van driven by SPO4 Ramon Rivas, who later surrendered. Rivas said he was driving his car to report for duty when the victim suddenly crossed his path in Barangay Tagas in Daraga. A bicycle dented crushed Lucero to the hospital.

Juliana M. Garaga, Inquirer Southern Luzon

■ DAVAO CITY

Cop, wife found dead

A PCSUPT official and his wife were found dead inside their house in Catalunan Pequeño in Davao City early Thursday.

Police investigators had no clue as to what had happened to Insp. Edwin Mallabo and his wife Melinda, whose bodies were found at about 2:30 a.m., Supt. Antonio Rivera, public information officer of Davao City Police Office, said.

But they were certain that the weapon used to kill the couple was Mallabo's 9-mm service pistol, Rivera said. He said the couple's 13-year-old child "was too traumatized to speak."

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

ONE OF the war photos on exhibit shows Japanese tanks rolling on the streets of Iloilo City during World War II.

Photo exhibit brings tears to the elderly

By Nestor T. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—MOST OF THE black-and-white pictures were grainy and blurred. But their images still evoked vivid memories, brought tears to the elderly, and told unknown stories to the young.

Thousands of Ilonggo people here flocked to an exhibit of rare photographs of World War II on Panay to land at the local event area of SM City in Mandurriao district.

The exhibit, initiated by Mayor Jerry Treñas and the 6th Military District WWII Veterans Association Inc., is a tribute to World War II heroes as part of the commemoration of the 64th anniversary of the liberation of Panay, Guimaras and Romblon islands from Japanese occupation.

The guerrillas in Panay led by Gen. Macario Peralta Jr. were recognized as among the best organized in the country. They organized, in par, up-to-date of former resistance movements against the Japanese.

The exhibit opened on March 18 and will last until March 31. It will be transferred to the provincial capitol and brought to various municipalities in Panay, and project director Jay Balroig.

Around 100 photographs mounted on turquoise panels depict the war on the island from Dec. 18, 1941 to March 20, 1945.

The images include those of Japanese soldiers in Iloilo City and Capiz and in the neighboring towns.

Several photographs showed tanks rolling along the historic Calle Real (J.M. Basa Street) at the heart of the city.

Another was on the landing of the Japanese Army's Kawamoto Detachment in Barangay Tupaz in Oton town in Iloilo on April 16, 1942.

Among the most interesting were photographs of the Japanese invasion and occupation of Panay and the destruction of Iloilo City, provided by Dr. Ma. Luisa Maliwanag, a history professor at the University of the Philippines in the Visayas.

There were photographs of anti-Japanese propaganda, which were the Axis's (Japanese-occupation forces) values they removed Iloilo City.

The exhibit also showed photographs of civilian Japanese residents (kyos) belonging to the Iloilo Japanese Association who were quartered by the Philippine constabulary for three months until they were released by sending from on April 28, 1942.

It displayed photographs of the liberation of Panay, including the landing of American forces in Barangay Tacas in Tigbauan town in Iloilo and the historic march of victorious Filipino guerrillas on Calle Real and in front of the Iloilo Customs House.

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—OFFICIALS OF THE Department of Energy, National Power Corp., the Power Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. and the Energy Regulatory Commission will be asked to explain before the Senate's economic cie emerge the large increase in power rates in the Visayas.

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago filed Senate Resolution No. 946 seeking an inquiry into the increase of P1.14/kwh to Meralco.

Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, Napocor president Froilan Tampinco, PSALM president Jose Emmanuel Eduque and ERC Chair Zenaida Cruz-Ducut were subpoenaed in the Senate inquiry in hearings to be set by Senator Defensor.

The senator asked for documents that would help him and his colleagues to better understanding the issue.

"With this hike, we're increasing the burden of our people who are already reeling from the effects of the financial crisis," Roxas said in her letter.

"We want to know why power rates were hiked, especially in the Visayas. Is it just? Are there other options that will not put so much burden on our people?" he said.

The inquiry, Roxas said, would determine the need to amend existing energy laws to better protect consumers.

It is the duty of the State to "protect the public interest as it is affected by the rates and services of electric utilities and other providers of electric power," he added.

Roxas also wanted the Senate to look into the claims of the Federation of Electric Cooperatives in Eastern Visayas that Napocor and PSALM did not notify the Philippine Rural Electric Cooperatives Association, other electric cooperatives and power consumers prior to the Visayas of their joint application for a power rate increase before the ERC, as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

The ERC, pending a ruling on Napocor's petition to increase its generation rate, has granted a provisional increase for the Visayas grid of P1.146 per kWh. This took effect this month.

Sen. Juan Miguel Zubiri encouraged cooperatives to register with the Cooperatives Development Authority to avail themselves of a 12 percent Value Added Tax exemption on power they consume.

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DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science Education Institute

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The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) through the Science Education Institute (SEI) announces the names of the scholarship qualifiers for SY 2009-2010. The new scholarship awardees must seek admission in the identified fields of study at any of the state colleges and universities and CHED Centers of Excellence. Each qualifier shall receive a notice of award from the DOST-SEI or DOST Regional Offices stating the date of orientation and contract signing. He/She shall report at the designated venue with a parent/legal guardian who is holding a 2009 Community Tax Certificate. The legal guardian is required to present his/her affidavit of guardianship.

The following are the qualifiers of the DOST-SEI Scholarship Programs (also available in www.science.scholarships.ph)

REGULAR RA 7687

Official List of Qualifiers for the 2009 DOST-SEI Science and Technology Scholarships

Official List of Qualifiers for the 2009 DOST-SEI Science and Technology Scholarships

Panlilio worries 2 bishops

From page A1

them alleged kickbacks from quarrying and "jueteng," an illegal numbers game.

Ungayen-Ilagan's brother-in-law Oscar Cruz said Panlilio should leave the priesthood if he wanted to run for president.

Cruz reminded Panlilio that universal Church law forbade clerics from assuming public office.

"How, therefore, could a priest be a politician at the same time (when there are) no less than two separate, official and categorical Church prohibitions to the exist?" Cruz said.

Over the weekend, Panlilio told the bayanes that he was open to the possibility of seeking the presidency with Nolasco as his running mate.

On Sunday, when the bayanes published a story on the chance for him to run for president, Quinsay's Ely Pamilio said he was swamped with phone calls, text messages and e-mail expressing support.

Get dispensation

Cruz, an acknowledged expert on canon law, said there was no such thing in the Church as a priest "on leave."

He said Panlilio was merely "suspended" as a priest, which means that he may not exercise his priestly ministries in the meantime.

"The problem with suspension is it just removed all the rights, but his obligations (as a priest) remain, until he goes back and when the archbishop restores him back," Cruz said.

He advised Panlilio to first get dispensation from all his clerical obligations "definitively and permanently."

"There he is free to be and to do whatever he pleases. But to be a 'hyphenated' priest-politician is a big anomaly in the Church and a dilemma, if not a scandal, for many lay people," the priests said.

Cruz said Panlilio should leave the priesthood now "so he would not drag the clergy and the Church into downright juniper politics" and "so he will not shame, divide or threaten the clergy and the Church with his selfish blunders and personal liabilities."

"Last and foremost, he will hardly lose," Cruz said.

He pointed out that it was only Panlilio who went on temporary leave from priesthood, which includes all the clergy to reduce minorities had either asked for dispensation or were dismissed when they sought public office.

PANLILIO (right) and Paranaque Bishop Pedro Arigo

Haiti, Paraguay precedents

The archbishop cited the case of ousted Haiti President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a Catholic priest who was first elected president in 1990. He officially resigned from the priesthood in 1994 reportedly upon pressure from the Vatican.

"It is only in the Philippines where we have a governor who was suspended from being a priest," Cruz said.

In Asuncion, Fernando Lugo quit the clerb four years ago and ran for president last year. His victory ousted the 61-year rule of the Colorado Party.

Antonio's disapproval of efforts to convince Panlilio to run for president was expected. The monsignor had been ordered to field Panlilio as a candidate for governor.

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Obama rhetoric, reality clash

From page A1

into arrest policy.

Asked by a campaign reporter how his supporters can be more effective in helping him bring the sweeping change he promised, Obama said: "Volunteer."

The event was part of a weekend-long media blitz that Obama had hoped would help sell his budget—the foundation of the health care, education and energy changes he promised in the campaign.

But his budget message was overshadowed for much of the week by the public furor over millions of dollars in executive bonuses paid by American International Group (AIG) after the insurance giant had received billions in federal bailout funds.

"There was a lot of entertainment during the campaign and we were talking about the importance of bringing about change," Obama told the reluctantly.

"We are moving systematically to bring about change. But change is hard."

He said the same debate dance each of his predecessors faced in moving from candidate to president, only to find he couldn't stick exactly by his word.

Each was hamstrung by his responsibility to the entire nation and to individual constituencies, to the rights of foreign and domestic landscapes, and the trappings of the federal government and Washington itself.

Once in the White House, presidents quickly learn they are only one part of the political process, not in charge of it. They discover the trade-offs they must make and the parties they must please to get things done. Inevitably, they find out that it's impossible to follow through completely on their campaign proposals.

Cries of hypocrisy

For now, at least, Obama's elevations have served only to invite occasional cries of hypocrisy from some Republicans and infrequent grumbles of disappointment from some Democrats.

Obama has popularity on his side, and it seems people mostly are chalking up his moves to much-needed flexibility at a difficult time.

But the shifts could take a toll over time if they become a pattern—and the public grows weary.

His overall job performance marks could suffer and jeopardize his likely reelection campaign in 2012.

People could perceive Obama as a say-one-thing-do-another politician and the Democratic-controlled Congress could see him as a weak chief executive.

Obama's moves and maneuvering by political cover mocks the games.

He had spent most of the campaign promising to bring the country's many problems to it months after taking office, though he left himself wiggle room.

After directing his commanders to map out a responsible pullout, President Obama adjusted that timeline to 19 months and left 50,000 troops, almost one-third of the current force, would remain.

While campaigning, Obama frequently assigned an lobbyists, saying, "When I am president, they won't find a job in my White House."

New-style leader?

Then he took office and had an 822-thousands of positions. He did allow former lobbyists to join his administration.

But he imposed ethics rules barring them from dealing with issues they had lobbied in the previous two years. In several cases, he has made outright exceptions.

Obama the candidate pledged to curb spending directed at lawmakers' pet projects; they're known in Washington as "earmarks."

Obama the president signed an "imperfect" $410 billion budget measure that included 9,500 earmarks.

He had little choice. The measure, a holdover from last year, was needed to keep government from shutting down.

But to blunt the fallout, Obama ordered guidelines to ensure tighter restraints on the practice and made a new promise: Future earmarks won't become law so easily.

As for politics, Obama campaigned as a new-style leader who cherished partisanship and renounced divisiveness in Washington.

But as president, Obama's White House aides wanted little time pestering on Republicans and mocking conservative commentator Rush Limbaugh as the Republicans' leader.

On fiscal matters, Obama the candidate urged Americans to spend to their belts.

Once in office and saddled with recession, though, he signed a $787 billion stimulus measure and inclined a $3.6-trillion budget plan that will plunge the nation deeper into deficits.

But again he paired the prospect with a new promise, to cut the deficit by more than half by the end of his first term.

Lost aura of candor

If there is something that Obama has not lost, it is the mandate of his presidency, it may not his popularity, which remains high.

It was the aura of candor surrounding the new American leader, who is facing an intimidating task.

Nobody in his administration was surprised by compensation contrary that have triggered the AIG scandal. AIG, after only thanks to $170 billion in government rescue money, doled out $165 million in bonuses to top executives.

Larry Sabato, a professor of politics at University of Virginia, argued that this event was "the beginning of the end of the age of innocence" for the Obama administration.

"Yes, the AIG scandal has been on President Obama's watch, and clearly, his economy needs to be fixed," Sabato said. "There is no way to blame that on the Bush administration."

He added that it was "remarkable how quickly former presidents fade in the public memory."

Even before the scandal erupted, experts like David Brooks, an analyst with The Washington Post, said that, in his view, it was not too soon to say that "the Obama honeymoon is over."

FDR model

"He talent to Washington and around the world have found their voices, and they are subjecting his administration to the kind of skeptical questioning that is normal for chief executives once they settle into their jobs," Brooks wrote on March 15.

At the height of the Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for office promising to balance the budget. But he reversed course and doled out a spending prescription to revive the economy. He made other shifts as well.

The ruling public didn't view Roosevelt as wishy-washy or politically calculating, but rather as a president who was experimenting in hopes of finding policy to fix the problems. His charm and communication skills allowed him to get away with it.

Historians agree that seems to be the model Obama is hoping to emulate.

"I didn't come here to pass on vast problems to the next president or the next generation—I came here to solve them," he said on Saturday in his radio and Internet address.

A charismatic orator, he's trying to govern with a pragmatic manner while projecting a still-hopeful compromise.

Obama's mantra these days: "We will not let the pursuit of the perfect stand in the way of achievable goals." Reports from AP and AFP

Why Edsa keeps coming back

From page A1

He said he was keeping a pledge he made last year to change the leadership if the party's popularity failed to recover. He said a year had passed and "support for us has not grown. On the contrary, it has diminished." He is to officially notify parliament today of his decision.

Quinsay said his reputation was badly damaged when news media in 2006 broadcast a speech he made in which he was heard telling a rally that the outcome of the May elections a few months earlier.

The broadcast sparked weeks of protests and riots that left hundreds injured.

Quinsay has been in power since 2004, winning reelection in 2006 to become the first Hungarian premier since the end of communism in 1989 to hold on to power.

Not in RP's tradition

The stand-down is not expected to touch off a contagious wave of resignations in other political systems, especially ours, where a ruling regime has been plagued by an irrevocable sheep of negative public satisfaction ratings since 2005 to years since Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was elected to a new term amid widespread charges that she had cheated the 2004 election.

Quinsay's resignation is not likely to shame the Arroyo administration into stepping down despite public mass protests demanding her resignation since 2005.

By contrast, the Hungarian prime minister conceded responsibility for the troubles facing the ruling socialist coalition and their failure in past economic reforms rather than to blame the political opposition and external forces driving the global recession.

The 45-year-old Quinsay successfully steered his coalition to become the first Hungarian government to be elected in a second term since democratic elections were restored in 1990.

Popularity rating

Hungary has been badly hit by the global financial crisis and has suffered more than most former Eastern bloc nations, despite having had one of the most dynamic variable economies at the time of communism's collapse. The government is expected to shrink by no more than 5 percent in 2009.

Quinsay has called a minority government since the Free Democrats quit the governing coalition last year. He won a full term outright in April 2006 but was badly damaged by the revelations about his having lied about the state of the economy.

A poll released last week showed his popularity stood at 18 percent—the lowest ever for a prime minister since Hungary's return to democracy, but nothing compared with the negative net satisfaction ratings of the Arroyo administration since 2005.

Quinsay won a confidence vote in parliament in October 2006 amid turbulence over his admission that he lied to voters in the April 2006 election campaign.

But in nine cities, he apologized for lying to them. As many as 50,000 people gathered in front of parliament to demand that he quit.

Quinsay apologized for not facing up to economic realities in the general election.

He said his government campaigned on promises to improve living standards but was forced to abandon big tax cuts and other boosts in 2006 in an effort to reduce a budget deficit that had ballooned to 10 percent—the biggest in the European Union.

"We avoided facing up to reality, we locked onto magic and we tried to bypass the more honest, simpler answers. If an apology is needed for anything, then it is for this, I apologize," he said.

Edsa keeps coming back

Quinsay made the admission after Hungarian radio played a tape of a meeting with the socialist MPs a few months after the election. He told the MPs his "housebound" government failed to introduce any real policies.

He said harsh economic reforms were needed.

"There is not much choice. There is not, because we screwed up. Not a little, a lot. No European country has done something so boneheaded as we have. Tridentely, we lied throughout the last year and a half, two years," he said.

Those comments spawn any significant government measures for the period of, other than at the end we managed to bring the government back from the brink. Starting, U we have to give account to the country about what we did for four years, then what do we say?"

Quinsay paid a heavy price for his candor. He lost his office.

Have we ever heard of any Filipino politician of consequence making this kind of mea culpa? Or stepping down?

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'Rugby boys' kill, rob man in Tondo

Cop says warehouse worker's slay a case of mistaken identity

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A STAY-IN WORKER OF A WAREhouse on 530 Morioness St., Tondo, Manila, was killed and robbed by a gang of solvent-sniffing streetchildren believed led by a 17-year-old boy.

Rich Bucudlor, 29, was declared dead on arrival by attending doctors at the Gat Andres Bonifacio Memorial Hospital due to multiple stab wounds.

Operatives of the Manila Police District, meanwhile, have started looking for the nine youngsters—all teenagers—who took the victim's money and cell phone.

SPO1 Rolando Ilo of the MPD homicide section said the stabbing incident took place shortly after midnight Sunday in front of Plaza Morioness, Barangay 6 in Morioness.

He added that before that, Bucudlor was drinking with his coworkers—Oscar Bilaro and Jessie Aguilera—at the warehouse compound when the victim excused himself, saying he was going out to buy something from a nearby sari-sari store.

He said that shortly after midnight, Bilaro heard someone banging loudly on the warehouse gate. When he went out to see who was making the noise, he heard Bucudlor yelling for help.

Bilaro said he peered out of the gate and saw Bucudlor being attacked by a group of youngsters. As he picked up a piece of wood to help his coworker, the youngsters fled, leaving a badly wounded Bucudlor.

Bilaro rushed the victim to the nearest hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival. A check of his belongings showed that his wallet, which contained his salary of P5,200 was missing along with his cell phone.

He said that several months ago, Bucudlor, as the warehouse had driven away a group of teenagers who were sniffing rugby in front of the establishment, resulting to a scuffle between the two groups.

However, Bucudlor, who was hired only recently, was probably mistaken by the group as one of the workers who had chased them away, he added.

Marikina police chief wants to empower precinct heads

METROBRIEFS

Doctor killed in mishap

A DOCTOR was killed while her husband was injured when the motorcycle they were riding on was sideswiped by a trailer truck on Tandang Sora Avenue in Quezon City on Saturday morning.

Dead on arrival (DOA) Romualdo L. Maaño and Dr. Odilia Dalandan, 47, a resident of 6545 Village, Project 8, Quezon City, was declared dead on arrival at the Quezon City General Hospital due to head injuries. Dr. Ilio Alfon Nuno, her husband, Alexander, was treated for minor bruises and contusions. Investigation showed that suspect owner-driver Rowda Nino, a motorcycle driver while they were hit by a truck at the intersection of Tandang Sora and Mindanao Avenue also near DOH on Saturday. The truck driver, Dino Gallog, gave himself up to the police after the accident.

Nancy C. Carvajal

Int'l confab on March 25

THE ICSA Philippines Foundation, in cooperation with the Japan Foundation, is sponsoring the "International Conference on Folklore Heritage and Shared Visions—Pathway to Peace" at the Pearl Manila Hotel in Manila from March 25 to 27. Professor speakers during the conference are authorities on the culture of peace in Japan, Indonesia, Pakistan, Vietnam and the Philippines. The opening conference is headed by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda with Vicky Sava and Mirta Ang as speakers.

DID YOU KNOW

THE LARGEST operational computer in the country, a 41-node Silicon Graphics Inc.-based supercomputer, can be found in the astronomical observatory of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration located on the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City. The telescope was donated by the Japanese government in 2004.

Cyril L. Bonalaos, Inquirer Research

By Oji Yap

COMMANDERS OF POLICE precincts in Marikina City will soon be known as "little bosses per district of police," the newly installed head of the Marikina Police Station said yesterday.

Senior Supt. Romeo Magtalas, also replaced Supt. Soreco Ramos as the city's police chief last month, said he wants to devolve the duties and responsibilities of the city police headquarters to the local precincts.

"My vision is empowerment of precincts and precinct commanders. I want to devolve some of the responsibilities of the headquarters to the precinct commanders, like in prosecution and placement," he said in a phone interview.

He said the current system is too "centralized," necessitating the transfer of duties to the police officers patrolling the community.

"I want the precinct commanders to be called little Superchief CSMs (chiefs of police)," Magtalas said.

He said empowering the community precincts would help speed up police response time and allow the community to solve its own problems without intervention from the head office.

Magtalas added that for his big shoes to fill as the new police chief and that he hopes to continue Ramos' accomplishments, such as being named the Best Police Station among all units of the Eastern Police District.

Since he assumed office, he said the city had not had any serious crimes, although he added that this was "no reason [for him] to relax" and he assures to be complacent.

Cops arrest 2 students for robbing cab driver

By Jeannette I. Andrade

POLICE ARRESTED TWO COLLEGE students who allegedly stabbed and wounded a taxi driver when he tried to stop them from robbing him shortly after midnight yesterday in Manila.

Police identified the suspects as Jaime Jr. Signad Village, Tagaig City, and Ernesto Gorres, 23, of the Cruz, Manila, tried to snatch the police by jumping into the Pasig River but were eventually caught.

According to spokesmen of the Manila Police District's Ermita Station 5, the two were attendants of the Philippine Maritime Institute Colleges.

Both were arrested after they stabbed Benjamin Jolongo, 30, the driver of a Mondejar taxi unit (TNH, 459) and a resident of Cambio, Makati City.

At press time, Polanco was still confined at the Philippine General Hospital for a stab wound in his abdomen.

Police reports showed the two were flagged down the victim's taxi cab at Dimas Sts. Cruz at around 12:20 a.m. yesterday and asked him to take them to Malate.

SPO3 Glenaro Gallejo, case investigator, said that when the taxi reached Liwasang Bonifacio, the two pulled out knives and told the driver to give them his money.

The victim, however, refused to take the bills away from one of the robbers who wielded him. Although wounded, he managed to step on the brakes, alight from the taxi cab and seek help from people in the area.

At this point, the robbers also alighted from the vehicle and fled. An FO3 Melchor Cortes of the Plaza Lawton police outpost and several barangay tanod gave chase, the two men jumped into the Pasig River.

The police, however, hitched them out of the river and turned them over to the MPD Ermita Police Station 5.

Jolongo and Gorres were detained at the police station pending the filing of charges of attempted robbery with homicide/ homicide against them in the Manila prosecutor's office.

JEEPNEYS OBSTRUCT TRAFFIC

Joyce, 36, of Quezon City writes: "Jeepneys keep waiting for passengers on both sides of the Edsa-Kamuning underpass, blocking traffic. This happens all day and allnight, every day. Also, ngon traffic enforcers para parang wrong mission (There are traffic enforcers but it's as if they do not see anything).

INQUIRER.NET

Citizen's call

Rising robbery cases

WE REPORT to you yung sinabi ko sa inyo noon dito sa West Avenido. Kanina umaga, yung mismo ka nakabilar nakapit pa sa lalaki nanay. Ay trauma yung mismo ka nakabilar sa lalaki. Kanamin yun sa nakabilar na ako sa mga nakabilar dito sa mga nakabilar. Sana nakabilar sa nakabilar ang ito sa pakiusap ng Makati City if I want to report the incident nakabilar sa West Avenido. This morning, my wife was robbed near our house. She was traumatized by the experience. Most of the victims are call center agents. The robber at least place is mind every day to the place. We hope you can help us bring this problem to the attention of Makati City officials.

ELSA PAREDES, West Avenido, Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City

Busted traffic light

THE TRAFFIC light at Pedro Gil corner Taft Avenue has been busted for a month now, causing heavy traffic in the area which is aggravated by jeepneys occupying terminals of the street while waiting for passengers.

ALEX E., 32, Manila

Fix the street lamps, please

PLEASE have the two street lights in our area fixed. The bulbs are already busted.

SHIRLEY PERILLA, 38, San Pedro Street, Quezon City

No U-Turn sign needed at intersection

REFER the ORDER can put a set of lane signals the center lane of Quezon Avenue and Banawe going to Del Monte. It is one lane lane lane, there are two UC traffic enforcers waiting for you.

JOEL, 42, Morning, Quezon City

Toilets for commuters at LRT stations

THE LRT management should be commended heavily by constructing a toilet in each station, particularly at Pasay-Roxas/Libertad where thousands of passengers converge. They should also make their toilet in D. Jose Station operational.

RONNEL GAMIT, 32, Sto. Cruz, Manila

Errant MMDA traffic enforcers

ATTENTION: Chairman Bayani Fernando. There are MMDA traffic enforcers waiting at the corner of Julio Vargas Avenue and Edsa, busy road-side today from motorists running right to left illegal and from Edsa. Please take action.

GILBERT TAN, 38, Quezon City

Poor customer service

PAL EXPRESS keeps their clients waiting. Going to Catbalogan, my group of 11 was moved to a later flight twice. They only gave prior notice the first time they transferred us. When we checked in for the second time, we found out that our flight had again been cancelled and we were once more transferred to a later flight. On our way home, our flight was again cancelled and we were moved to a flight three hours later, and to Bubog instead of Catbalogan. We only found out about this when we checked in at 8 a.m. None of us received any word about the cancellation, even though they still have our numbers. Notes and e-mail addresses because they asked us to write it down on the spot when we left. Many of us missed appointments and meetings. We also received no compensation for our trouble except for cheap sandwiches and a bottle of water each.

T. LEDESMA, 21, Makati

Water leak in Quezon City

THERE is a water leak in front of 79 Matthew St., Masambong, San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City. Despite any notice, workers keep patches on pipes. What a waste of water, the leak is getting deeper!

JESUS AGUILA, 44, Quezon City

Leaking pipes on Araneta Avenue

THERE are water leaks on both sides of Araneta Avenue between Palma St. and Lourdes Streets in Quezon City.

ARTA, 37, Quezon City

Wanted: Body to regulate tricycle fares

WHO'S in charge of regulating tricycle fare? Tricycle drivers in Pasay City outside the Sun Valley at their gate were either. Even before the jeepney fare raise. The drivers were already charging P20 for short distances. Have they noticed the law with the rollbacks?

JAR, 37, Quezon City

Pimps and sex workers in Makati

I'D LIKE to call the attention of NCRPO Director Leopoldo Bataoil regarding the presence of pimps, pickpockets and gays/prostitutes dressed as women roaming in the vicinity of Makati commercial and residential district, especially in Ayala Center (Glorietta) Promenade, Landing Garage (Level Entrance), Greenbelt Park, Makati Avenue, all Ramos from Manila Peninsula, Olympia Tower, Arnaiz, Mercedes to Philamlife/Bel-Air (end of Mang Inasal, McDonalds, NCRPC on Arnaiz Street corner Makati Avenue, Chinatown, Glorietta, Starbucks, Banco de Oro, Ninth Park, Bi-S Diner, and also on Makati Avenue and P. Burgos Street from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m., seven times a week. They victimize tourists and foreigners alike in a very similar to Ben Alonzo/Bonbon Gang. I hope our "Mayoung Pedro" would promptly act on this matter.

FRANCIS ARNAUT LACSU LUCHAUCO, JR. Bel-Air Village, Makati City

Dark pedestrian overpass in Pasay

AN OVERPASS up along Buendia, corner Taft Avenue, Pasay City, is very dark. Pedestrians using the overpass are in danger of being mugged. Please put lights and assign a policeman to the overpass on Monday, Friday at night to prevent robbery.

ANONYMOUS, 25, Pasay

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April 22, 2009 1:00pm to 5:00pm, Bahia, Hotel Intercontinental, Makati City

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- Third, we will give you pre-to-act recommendations about what to do if you find your business is in any one of these five classifications.

*Based on the analysis of a nationwide consumer coping behavior data gathered during the third quarter of 2008 in the start of the global financial crisis, conducted by TNS-NFO, INC., the market research advisory arm of Mannasmith. Selected data will be presented.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:

Dr. Noel Roberto is vice-chairman & chief insights advisor of Mannasmith and Fielders, Inc. and chairman of PAOMA Inc. He is the 1st Asian co-author of Philip Kotler, author of over 10 marketing books including two-friendly Marketing Research, a former professor of Asian Institute of Management, a multi-awarded marketing educator (agro-executive '94 & '02 Lifetime Achievement Awardee in marketing education '03) and a well-read, well-respected columnist of Marketing Inc.

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For inquiries and registration, please call Ms. Belinda at tel. no. (02) 584-3888 / 584-4888 / 703-3388 / 722-3318 / 412-8833; fax 8918-81-3888; email us at info@mannasmith.net or visit our website at www.mannasmith.net

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BID BOND is either in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to two and one half per cent (2.5 %) of the total bid price. Bid bond less than the required amount will be automatically disqualified. Bids proposal submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

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Iran's supreme leader dismisses Obama overtures

TEHRAN, IRAN—(HAMY 23)—Iran's supreme leader rebuffed President Barack Obama's outstretched hand on Saturday, saying Tehran was still waiting to see concrete changes in US policy.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was responding to a video message Obama released on Friday in which he marked the start of Nowruz, the Persian new year, and expressed hope for an improvement in nearly 30 years of strained relations.

Khamenei holds the last word on major policy decisions, and how true ultimately respected or any concrete US effort to engage the country will depend largely on his say.

In his most direct assessment of Obama and prospects for better ties, Khamenei said there will be no change between the two countries unless the American president puts an end to US hostility toward Iran and brings "real change" in foreign policy.

"How does the degree of change but no change is easy to predict. We haven't seen any change," Khamenei said in a speech before a crowd of tens of thousands in the northeastern holy city of Mashhad.

In his video message, Obama said the United States wants to engage Iran, but he also warned that a fight place the time in the international community "cannot be resolved through violence or years, but rather through peaceful action that demonstrates the true greatness of the Iranian people and civilization."

Khamenei called how Obama could congratulate Iranians on the new year and assume the country of supporting terrorism, and ordering nuclear weapons in the same message.

Khamenei said there has been no change even in Obama's language compared to that of the predecessor.

"He (Obama) handed the Islamic Republic of Iran fists the first day. If you are right that change has come, where is that change? What is the sign of that change? Make it clear for us that has changed."

Still, Khamenei left the door open to better ties with America, saying "should you change, our behavior will change too."

Diplomatic ties between the US and Iran were cut after the US Embassy hostage taking of, for the 1979 Islamic Revolution, which toppled the pro-US shah and brought to power a government of Islamic clerics.

The United States has maintained with Iran in late 2001 and 2002 in the Afghanistan conflict, but the prevailing concern Iran—and were extinguished completely when Bush branded Tehran part of the "Axis of Evil."

Khamenei enumerated a long list of known grievances against the United States over the past 30 years and said the US was still interfering in Iranian affairs. AP

WorldBriefs

Obama defends embattled Treasury chief

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama has thrown his weight behind his embattled Treasury chief, saying Timothy Geithner would not be allowed to resign. Should Geithner offer his resignation, Obama told CBS he would turn down that offer and request: "Sorry buddy, you've still got the job." Asked why he believes Geithner should remain in office despite a series of tax problems that have come to light since his confirmation, Obama said Geithner has been under fire for his handling of the economic crisis and a political scandal over massive bonuses paid out by insurance giant American International Group, which has received federal money bailout to taxpayers.

AFP

British reality TV star Jade Goody dies of cancer

LONDON—Jade Goody, a working-class British reality TV star who became a multimillionaire after her fame exploded on the show "Big Brother" but died young of cervical cancer, has died at the age of 27, her family announced Sunday.

GOODY

Goody's publicist Max Clifford said. By endlessly posting new love affairs and battles with the disease, newspapers, gossip magazines and television have kept her in the public eye for almost a decade.

Reuters

Octuplet mom won't reveal children's father

LA HABRA, California—The Southern California woman who gave birth to octuplets apologized in a video posted on Saturday to the father of all 14 of her children and reiterated that she would never reveal his identity. "I'm sorry for all the mess, and I hope he isn't scared if it came out because it wasn't," Nadya Suleman said in the RadarOnline.com video. "As far as I'm concerned, I'll never disclose who he is," Suleman said the man is a foreign-born California resident in his 30s, has not ever disclosed his current address. He was a friend who acted more a good father, Suleman said, adding that their 7-year-old son Elijah resembled him.

AP

Ford proposes to girlfriend Flockhart

WASHINGTON—US actor Harrison Ford is engaged to be married to longtime girlfriend Calista Flockhart, People magazine reported on Saturday. It quoted sources close to the couple as saying Ford, 66, has asked girlfriend Flockhart, 44, with an engagement ring during the Valentine's Day weekend while they were away on a family vacation with son Liam.

Reuters

Incest not always a crime in EU

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY—(OP-printing as it may seem, incest is not always a crime in Europe.

Three European Union countries—France, Spain and Portugal—do not prosecute consenting adults for incest, and Romania is considering following suit.

The shocking case of Austrian Josef Fritzl, found guilty this week of holding his daughter captive for 24 years and fathering his seven children, has focused new attention on incest—which is a crime in itself in dumb even if the acts are consensual. But in the Fritzl case it was in connection with rape, homicide and other charges that led to a sentence of life in a secure psychiatric ward.

Laws exempting parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters from prosecution for incest were seen as if they are not forced upon adult family members are decades old in France, Spain and Portugal.

In Romania, decriminalizing incest among consenting adults is being considered as part of a wide range of reforms to the country's criminal code. No date has been set yet for a parliament vote on the bill, and opposition to the proposal is forceful, even among some lawmakers who support its passage.

Currently all forms of incest in Romania are punishable by up to seven years in prison. But Romania's justice ministry supports the new legislation would move the country—which joined the European Union two years ago—closer legally to some other EU members.

"Not everything that is immoral has to be illegal," said justice ministry legal expert Marius Iliescu. "We cannot help them people by letting them into criminals and punishing them."

Incest is defined as sexual intercourse between people too closely related to marry legally. In the United States, all 50 states and the District of Columbia prohibit even consensual incest, although a few states impose no criminal penalties for it, according to the Harvard Law Review.

Newspaper articles in Romania have estimated the planned legal change may exacerbate incest. The ministry, however, countered with a statement claiming that incest cannot be dropped with "criminal sanctions, but with medical and social measures, because incest is based on pathological behavior."

Not all Romanians accept the justice ministry's argument. AP

YOURS FOR ONLY $1,000

The world's cheapest car, the Tata Nano, will be launched next week with backers hoping to tempt the global economic crisis will run out of buyers from India's emerging middle classes. The ultra-low-budget car has attracted 100,000 buyers (2,000) for the basic model.

Hungary's PM offers to resign amid turmoil

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY'S PRIME MINISTER Ferenc Gyurcsany offered on Saturday to resign so that a new government could lead the country out of the economic turmoil that has made it among the most troubled economies in Europe.

Gyurcsany's announcement, at a meeting of his Socialist Party that has governed every successive political observers in Budapest, the capital, who were trying to sort out whether it was a radical realignment or a ploy by an unpopular politician to shore up his position in a time of crisis.

Either way the move ushered in a period of the worst of instability in a nation that was once a magnet for investment among former communist countries and had billion on hand times ever before credit markets began to ebb up and the world stumbled toward recession.

"I have that I can the obstacle in the cooperation required for change. I am a stable governing majority and the responsible behavior of the opposition," Rotary quoted Gyurcsany as saying in the party congress on Saturday. "If so, then I on eliminating the obstacle now I propose that we form a new government under a new prime minister."

Governments in both the small Baltic nation of Latvia and Iceland have fallen this winter as a result of the economic setbacks those countries faced, and Hungary appears poised to join them.

Gyurcsany asked his party to find a new candidate for prime minister within the next two weeks, but said that he wished to remain the party's leader. There are no plans for new elections in Hungary.

Agnes Ismael Mate, director of the Respectus Institute, a research group in Budapest, said the result of April's likely loss of public support, with a term of office lasting nearly a year before the next election. However, he did not rule out the possibility that Gyurcsany would still stubbornly remain in office.

"If there is nobody who is ready to do that job, Mr. Gyurcsany will campaign for position and he will be the winner," Mate said. "I could imagine it."

There is no less narrower waiting to take Gyurcsany's place. He and his fellow Socialists have criticized for raising taxes and cutting benefits to rein in the country's budget deficit. AFP

The WORLD

Editor Lamberto B. Quiazon

US gov't may buy up banks' toxic assets

WASHINGTON—STRUGGLING TO CONTAIN THE WORST financial crisis in seven decades, the Obama administration wants to buy billions of dollars of toxic assets from banks to ease borrowing for consumers and businesses.

Some industry officials familiar with the details said on Saturday they expected the approach would try to remove as much as $1 trillion from banks' books. An announcement from Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner could come as early as Monday.

If banks are not burdened by the worst loans, then they would be in better shape to resume more normal lending.

According to administration and industry officials, the plan would rely on the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. to supplement the government's $700 billion bailout fund.

The expense over the millions of dollars in bonuses for employees at troubled insurance giant American International Group Inc. has dimmed prospects for getting more bailout money from Congress.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the details have not been announced, said Geithner's plan will have three major parts:

■ a public-private partnership to back private investors' purchases of bad assets. The $700 billion bailout fund would provide the backing. The government would match private investors dollar for dollar and share any profits equally.

■ expanding a recent Fed program that provides loans for investors to buy securities backed by consumer debt. It's an effort to make it easier for people to get autos, student and credit card loans. The Term Asset-Backed Securities Loans Facility (TALF) program is getting up to $100 billion from the bailout fund; that money then is being leveraged to support up to $1 trillion in Fed loans. Under Geithner's plan for the toxic assets, part of that $1 trillion would come go to support purchasers of banks' troubled assets.

■ using the FDIC, which guarantees bank deposits, to purchase toxic assets. Officials said the agency would create special investment partnerships and then lend them money to buy up troubled assets.

Industry officials said the administration had not decided on how to share the exact amounts of money to be invested in the effort.

"The key is going to be if the government buys these assets quickly," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Economy.com. "The sooner they get these assets off banks' balance sheets, the quicker the system will find its footing and get the economy moving again."

Geithner's announcement that as much as $1 trillion would be made available to private investors to buy up bad assets from banks helped push the Dow Jones industrial average up 380 points on Monday, but many economists and investors were disappointed that Geithner did not have more details.

Some analysts worry the market may soon again be underwhelmed, in part because the government still has not decided on the problem.

"The market is looking for a 'none' factor where they can see the administration is finally doing enough," said Sung Won Sohn, an economics professor at the Smith School of Business at California State University.

The administration had said in February it needed more time to work out thorny problems that former Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and the Bush administration had been unable to resolve.

Geithner's new plan is meant to unsnarl what is widely viewed as the major failure of the bailout program so far: the inability to rid banks of a mountain of tainted home and troubled mortgage-backed securities. AP

SMART officials headed by Network and Platforms Services Division (NPSD) Head Myra G. Tampus (third from right) award the prizes to the top three winners — one of whom was their own agency SMART Pulse where Group Head Ramon R. Isberto, NPSD Planning and Engineering Senior Manager Eden Rosales and NPSD Senior Supervisor Cynthia Cabral.

Batangas State University's Rajah Gerard Gangasang (center) in this year's PedalCEjan quiz bee champion. With him are (from left) PedalCEjan host and SMART Network Services Assistance for the Visayas Head Merichie Quiñez; judges Emmanuel Estrella, Luzviminda Bulanadi and Jose Ed Alcaraz; Isberto; IECEP Chairman Dr. Cesar Co; and SMART NPSD Access Network Head Patrick Bellosillo.

CHAMPION. (from left) Cynthia Miguel Lacson, faculty member Engr. Nonet B. Dizal, Alaina Khan, and Darry Tan make up the team that won the grand prize awards "SMART Sweet" at the 5th SWEEP Awards. Not in photo is team member Allen Dickson Santos.

1ST RUNNER-UP. An all-girl team led by faculty member Engr. Melissa D. Pilar gets "MTS, SIS and UAV" into second place at the 5th SWEEP Awards. (From left) Engrs. Rizelle D. Bilinas, Czarina P. Dimaguiat and Flora May L. Dela Cruz.

2ND RUNNER-UP. The team from Mapua Institute of Technology (MIT) wins the "SMART Asap Alpha" prize with Prof. Orlando Arvind Bandolino, faculty member Engr. Bhel Vincent and Dale Ola.

Smart Communications, Inc. (SMART) proudly announces the winners of the 5th SWEEP Innovation and Excellence Awards, held recently at the SM Mega Mall in Mandaluyong City.

Adopting the theme, "Strengthening Community-Based Emergency Management System", this year's search for the best wireless applications developed by partner schools under the Smart Wireless Engineering Education Program (SWEEP) drew 76 entries nationwide.

The top three teams with the best mobile solutions were selected from among 10 finalists by a distinguished board of judges headed by Dennis Salvacion, Information and Communications Technology head of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), with members Dr. Lorna Lao, officer-in-charge of Research, Development and Training Division of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA); Ramon E. Dungo, Deputy Executive Director of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP); Engr. Hilario B. Suatto, SMART Network and Platforms Services Division (NPSD) senior manager; and Engr. Hans Christian N. Alvarez, SMART NPSD Planning and Engineering manager.

The winning team received P500,000 cash prize and a trophy. Second and third place winners received corresponding prizes of P300,000 and P100,000 respectively. Their respective schools also received equivalent amounts in the form of grants.

Also a big winner at the 5th SWEEP Awards was new PedalCEjan quiz bee champion Rajah Gerard Gangasang. The 5th year ECE student from Batangas State University took home P40,000 for winning what is said to be the most challenging PedalCEjan yet. The year's quiz bee was conducted by the Institute of Electronics Engineers of the Philippines (IECEP).

The SWEEP Innovation and Excellence Awards is a major initiative of SWEEP, SMART's pioneering industry-academe partnership that seeks to help raise the level of technology and engineering education in the country (website www.smartsweep.ph).

ERICSSON
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POPE Benedict XVI kisses a child during his visit in Luanda on March 21.

Pope condemns sorcery, urges Angolans to turn to Church

LUANDA, ANGOLA— TENS OF THOUSANDS of Angolan Catholics lined the streets of the capital for a blessing from Pope Benedict XVI, who urged the country's faithful to reach out and convert people who believe in witchcraft.

"In today's Angola," he said on Saturday at Mass in Luanda, "Catholics should offer the message of Christ in the many who live in the fear of spirits, of evil powers by various deep-bed documents."

He also gave a message of hope to young people, including some wounded and maimed during Angola's long civil war, when he addressed a crowd of some 30,000 people later at a sports stadium, where a dress rehearsal was held.

"I think of the many tears you shed for the loss of relatives," he told the crowd at a service in the city where he watched the procession by young men with painted faces, and dancers in colorful costumes. The civil war soared with Angola's 1975 independence from Portugal and ended in 2002.

The 81-year-old Pontiff, wearing white robes, looked tired and moved slowly in the tropical heat during the youth appearance on the stadium.

Hours before he arrived at the Cogaleira stadium, a stampede broke out as the gates were opened to people waiting outside, and two people were killed in the crush, said Vatican spokesperson, the Rev. Federico Lombardi.

"The Pope is very upset," Lombardi said later. Initially, the police news agency LUSA cites an unidentified source at a local hospital as saying a man and a woman were killed, eight others were hospitalized with minor injuries, and 10 were given medical assistance at the site.

An AP reporter saw another stampede break out when the Pope arrived, and at least 29 people were taken away in ambulances.

In the morning, Benedict addressed thousands more the streets every time his motorcade passed and delighted the crowds by speaking in Portuguese. AP

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ ABS-CBN lets Pacquiao go /A30

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra ● Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Bichara

■ Cavs make it 8 straight; Lakers win /A31

Barako Bull stuns Talk 'N Text

STIL LUCAS'S Kelly Williams mark strikl possession a. Alaska's John Ferrick applies pressure. For more photos, click to extension.o/A31.

By Phineas R. Cunilla

ABOUT THE ONLY ONES WHO STILL thought Barako Bull had a shot at winning were the Barako Bull Energy Boosters.

Down by 26 with just under eight minutes left last night, Barako Bull rallied like crazy and nipped Talk 'N Text, 120-115, to snap the Boosters' losing streak—this was while climbing out of the Makati-PBA Phone Cup cellar at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The Boosters, who improved to 2-4, relied on a couple of understudied young guns as they edged out a 97-121 deficit to finally take their first team-of-the-land (stil) 'ACT seizure left.

Rookie power forward Larry Rodriguez completed a three-point play off Ranidel de Ocampo for a 113-112 lead, before Jojo Duiosit broke the game's last tie at 120 with two free throws off Mac Cardona with 3.3 mins left for the final count.

It was a bitter pill to swallow for the Texters, who looked well on the way to managing their straight game after thrashing control until late in the game.

But Barako Bull persevered, with coach Leo Isaac using a combination of players who seemed to prove themselves... Duiosit and Rodriguez included—to back up Sconers McPidgeon.

Talk N Text dropped to 2-3.

In the first game, Sta. Lucia held Alaska scoreless in the final 5:24 to pull off a 100-98 win and get back on track.

The Realtors recorded a 5-point deficit and even to 4-2, while erasing the stigma of blowing a 19-point lead on Thursday against San Miguel.

"It was a defensive struggle," said Sta. Lucia coach Bryan Fernandez. "We're 1-2 in defensive right now, this early, and so I've said before, those who make stops will win in the end. Defense really played a big factor in that game."

But it wasn't all defensive stops for the Realtors, who drew a 40-point performance from the rarely high-flying Anthony Johnson and 15 from Markus Aquino, 14 of them in the final two periods.

The defeat was the first for the Aces in three games since the arrival of Powell Eliis, who helped Alaska win Old Spice Cup in 2007 when the Aces were limited to no more than 6 foot 6 in height.

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SEA Youth tilt: Explosive start for 3 Illam nines

MANILE'S Tobi Imbisan (left) collides with Bangkok catcher Brisan Schneider as he slides for home.

By Cedrik F Tupas

THE INTERNATIONAL LITTLE LEAGUE Association of Manila (Illam) softball chase victories over foreign opposition as it launched its title retention bid on a wild note yesterday in the Southeast Asian Youth baseball and softball tournament at the Ateneo grounds in Quezon City.

On the day head coach Randy Ortiz declared that the local contingent will go for a sweep of all five divisions, five-time defending champion Illam responded with two wins over Bangkok and another over Singapore.

"We are doing well," Ortiz said. "Our target now is to sweep all divisions."

Manila cruised in the top of the girls' Junior League by sweeping its double-header yesterday.

The Manila Chosen, who are gunning for a third straight title, trounced nine team Manila 2, 13-7, before crushing Singapore, 14-5.

Cynthia Soriano, who reaches at the International School, starred for the Manilans, going three-for-four including a win home run against the Singaporeans, who pitched the ruse in the opening inning.

Manila Lhuillier, younger sister of softball chief Jose Ernest Lhuillier, also showed her mettle as pro-rented as she went 2-for-4.

Manila 2 started the day with a 7-0 blanking of Bangkok in the Minor League of the tournament sponsored by Inovers, Mister Donut, Tokyo Tokyo, EFC, Generals, Hypol, Philtrust Bank, Sta. Lucia Realty JFI, Knights Capital, Pioneer Insurance, Liberty Telecom, Jollibee, Alaska Milk, Pt. C. Pueblito Jewelers and PLDT.

Ivy Valle Gruz, 11th members Rafael Bala, Bea Buenaventure and Joaquin Jillano carried the fight for Manila 2, which scored four runs in the second inning.

Another Manila team in the Minor League overcame an erratic start to nip Bangkok, 10-9, in the Blue Eagle matchfield.

Manila overhauled a 6-9 deficit thanks to Bangkok's pitching error which was rendered five walks and allowed Ryan Tocobo, Miguel Herrera, Valerie Gil, Bala and Paulo Macaraeg to score in that order.

"The players were right early on and almost all their (Thais) runs were unearned," said Boni Villa, manager of the Manila Minor League team. "But they have never given up."

Manila bested Manila 2, 13-5, in the girls' Major League.

Singapore bounced an Illam's team mercy after whipping Manila, 14-2, in another boys' Minor League match. Manila also bowed to Singapore, 4-14, in the boys' senior division.

ABS-CBN lets Pacquiao go

By Jasmine W. Payo

RACING DOWN THE THREATS OF A countersuit brand, ABS-CBN said yesterday it "will not stand in the way" of Nikolino ring superstar Manny Pacquiao's renewing his ties with Solar Sports.

"Pacquiao approached ABS-CBN to be his media partner in airing his next fights," ABS-CBN said in a statement released by the company's communications head Bong Osorio, yesterday.

"We thank him for trusting us. He signed a contract with us, but we will not stand in the way if he decides to change his mind. We respect it, wish him good luck and we want to hear from him."

The world's ground-for-pound king decided to honor on Saturday his previous deal with Solar Sports to cast his May 2 fight against Ricky Hatton on GMA-7, ABS-CBN's network rival.

Solar Sports, which owns the "exclusive rights to the multi-visual presentation" of Pacquiao's fights until 2011, earlier signed a blockbuster agreement with GMA 7 to telecast the much-awaited Las Vegas bout.

ABS-CBN reported on its website yesterday that Pacquiao lawyer Franklin Drilon believed that "there is a possibility" Pacquiao will meet with ABS-CBN vice president for sports Peter Musngi in Los Angeles.

"We're 100 percent sure, at least legally, that nothing more can be done," said Attorney Jesus Solar Sports' VP for sales and marketing.

ABS-CBN initially said it is ready to present the interview of Pacquiao as Solar Sports prepared a P150-million court suit against it.

"Manny approached ABS-CBN and as in others, he will have the network's all-out support," Osorio said.

"Of course in this business, you should never be surprised," said Pacquiao. "But hopefully these shocks don't be our (Pacquiao Dir ABS-CBN) relationship rights to air the fight[s]."

ABS-CBN already aired TV spots that "Pay is Back" before Pacquiao announced, through a statement read by David on GMA 7 Saturday night, that his contract with Solar Sports remained "valid and binding."

UNHAPPY ONE Manny Pacquiao approached us, says ABS-CBN.

RP quintet eyes PBA, PBL stints

By Jane Navarro

THE SMART GILAS PILIPINAS NATIONAL team is looking at a toughening stint in the Philippine Basketball Association or the Philippine Basketball League.

Interesting Basketball ng Pilipinas executive director Noli Tada said the PBA experience is vital in honing up the players for bigger tournaments ahead.

"We will ask them (PBA officials) to allow us to play in a guest team in the league," said Tada. "It will not only provide the players tougher competition, but also help build the cohesiveness that the team needs."

Tada said the SBP recruit also explore the possibility of fielding the squad in the PBL.

Composed mostly of standouts from the UAAP and the NCAA, the national team under Serbian coach and SBP project director Rajko Toroman will be the country's bet in the 2011 Sea Asia Championship, the qualifying tournament for the 2012 London Olympics.

Tada said he would sit down with PBA commissioner Sonny Barrios to discuss the possibility of putting the Gilas squad in the 3-0 Phoenix Fuel Masters and Philippine conference in October.

"We're open to the possibility of playing in the PBA or any tournament that could help the national team achieve its objectives," said Tada.

The Samsung are scheduled to leave on Friday to train in Serbia. They will proceed to the United States on April 19 for a series of workouts, which will last for three weeks.

While in the US, the SBP will hold a training camp on May 2 and 3 in Las Vegas, Nevada, hopefully to recruit a player with Filipino roots to land up the 15-player team which now boasts of six-foot-10 Asiesh in Chris Tall.

A former Golden State Warrior, the 24-year-old Tall is the naturalized player in the PBA. Tada hopes to bring the 7-foot who arrived on February 19 in the country aimed Pba Asia Champions Cup on May 13-20 in Jakarta.

Archers first to train at NTC Luisita venue

By Jane Navarro

THE ARCHERS WILL BE THE FIRST athletes to test the viability of the proposed National Training Center which the Philippine Olympic Committee plans to build in Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. said no archery training facility and a target would be put up soon to aside the Cojuangco-owned sugarcane.

The Olympic Council of Asia last week approved a grant of $50,000 ($2.6 million) to the POC to come up with a plan for the NTC.

The International Olympic Committee also pledged to handroll the construction of the sports complex on a 50-hectare site inside Luisita.

"Archers will live and train on the site of the proposed training center in preparation for the Southeast Asian Games," said Cojuangco. "We want to see what happens if we put athletes in exclusive with modern facilities."

While training, the archers will be housed in temporary dormitories inside the site which the Cojuangcos are offering for a long-term lease at P1 a year.

Cojuangco said the archers will be joined by trainees, noninsurance, paralympic-type sports centers.

"They (archers) will not what the environment recommend and go into physical fitness and stress-management training for the Games," said Cojuangco.

Archery is expected to become a rich source of medals for the Philippines in the SEA Games in Laos on Dec. 9 to 16.

Cojuangco said a track oval, baseball-softball fields, swimming/diving pools, tennis courts, a football field, cricket/rugby and multipurpose gymnasium would be built at the site.

SPORTSWATCH

Inquirer's Melendres is new PSA president

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER SPORTS EDITOR TEODORICO MELENDRES has been elected unopposed as the new president of the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA).

He succeeded Daily Tribune's Aaron Cardona, who served as head of the country's oldest media organization the past two years.

Serving as Melendres' first and second vice presidents are Ray Bancud (Tangco) and Joel Jumilan (Business Mirror), respectively, while Flora Malanum (Standard Today) and Gerry Ramos (People's Journal) retained their respective posts as secretary and assistant secretary.

Jun Arbaiza, sports editor of People's Journal and the longest serving PSA officer, has been tapped senior adviser. He has served eight PSA presidents in the same capacity. The Debbies (Abadie) is the group's auditor.

Comprising the PSA board of directors are Sardina, Eleg Mumar (Abante-tabloid), Lito Tacujan (Philippine Star), Jimmy Cantor (Malaya), Noah Trinidad (Inquirer), Irene Gonzales (Inquirer) and Al Mendoza (Abante).

P400,000 at stake as SJC cockfest fires off today

EIGHT TOP-SEEDED COLLEGE AGGIES TOSSED IN THE 100-PLUS ARMY, AGO Robert A Cook Derby hosted by the Namfrel-led screening committee in Robert and Ariel Carvajalio at the San Juan Coliseum.

Among the favorites to rule the derby that stakes P400,000 are the entries of Patricio Antonio, Ricky Pesigan, Jeff Machado, Ado Arriesgo, Rey Boy Nebrija, Tony Madrid, Raymond Raffa, Miguel Ulit Ababa and Dick Bolante.

Last Saturday, the 122.4 entry of Louie Cua and Mike Alfeche Sardina topped the Rich Don Juan & Cock Derby with 5.5 points.

Mica and Tonio 5-cocker gets going in Makati

MORE THAN 100 FIGHTING COCKS GOT IN THE MICA AND TONIO'S 5-Cock Derby today at the Makati Coliseum.

Two Final Sparring guys from the gamefarm of hosts Mika and Tonio Reynoso will be battled off in the derby's elimination rounds today.

The list of participants includes long timers Mister Pesete, John Dejarnigo, Brenda Lumbok Cong, Dingdong Plaza, Bobby Dimamal, Dino Garcia, Jorge Fajardo, Patrick Antonio, Pat Dominguez, and Joey Samonte.

Who will stop San Miguel?

ONE GAME AT A TIME

Ian Sarmenta

SAN MIGUEL IS UNSCATHED BY ITS FIRST five outings in the Metroplex PBA Fiesta Conference with overseas ties in the field experiencing at least one loss.

Phil team chief Fitel Manganese says that it's the best start of San Miguel since 2004 and the longest win streak since an eight-game winning run in the elimination round of the 2000 Fiesta Conference which the Beermen won for their last title.

The Beermen are playing solid basketball despite the absences of the bulk of their frontline. Danny Seigle, Jimmy Belaforcas, Leroy Rigualo, Wesley Pingris as well as guard Mikey Cuerva are all nursing a variety of injuries.

Anyone who has those five players on their roster would want them playing but life in basketball...and team sports in general—dictates you provide first training players due to injuries is part of the game.

The Beermen who are healthy are showing the importance of being ready to step in if the frontline gets depleted.

Here are what the Beermen have done well to remain the only 5-0 star which will be helpful in a tournament with fewer classification games.

■ PLAY SMALL BUT TALL—Sam Miguel is quick and lethal when it plays small. Jonas Villanueva's combination have been solutions and, starting with a 30-point explosion against Alaska in its first game and 35-against Burger King in the second outing.

Together with Dondon Hontiveros, Bonbon Custodio, Glenn Rizada and Paisley Gonzales, San Miguel can attack with penetration and fastbreaks.

■ PLAY BIG—Even without the bulk of its frontline, San Miguel still has Dorian Peña, Mick Pennisi and Jay Washington to provide muscle inside.

The example allows San Miguel to maintain the halfcourt quickly Mac, the way Pennisi and Washington play allow the offense to keep floating because they are not really pass-up players.

■ RESILIENCE WITH FREEDOM—San Miguel opened its campaign last without an import, this when Gabe Freeman arrived, the Beermen found a versatile import who can score, rebound and run with them. He has averaged over 20 points, 12 rebounds and at least one assist per game.

In his first game, he blocked in 40 points and, more importantly, he hit crucial rally-breaking baskets when Burger King was threatening to tie the game.

■ PLAY ZONE WHEN NECESSARY—The Beermen can play a man zone when they want to thwart intentions by opponents. This can be upcoming accessories of their young individual players. In a 122-103 blowout win against Purefoods, San Miguel seized the zone with other defenses to frustrate the Ti Gamo. It didn't help that the Giants' outside scoring took an unscheduled vacation that day.

■ DELIVER SHOOTERS—Villanueva had been big games for the Beermen, then Wesley Gonzales and Hontiveros had their own big nights. Against Coca-Cola, Gonzales had 20 points, eight rebounds and two assists, proving that anyone can erupt for San Miguel.

So how do you stop a team that is playing heads-up ball? An anybody who has crashed in the PBA knows, tweaking and adjustments must be done swiftly and dreading San Miguel will have to be done from the drive, also and. Trying to confuse the Beermen may not be the best strategy to time.

The only problem is that defense is a consistent and route of hard work. It will require teamwork of a different kind where no same shirkers or how an opponent's offense is flowing is executed. The first units that give that also just might have a chance against the rampaging Beermen.

Koreans reach final of world baseball tilt

LOS ANGELES—OLYMPIC CHAMPION South Korea crushed the finals of the second World Baseball Classic with a dominating 10-2 win over Venezuela on Saturday.

Cleveland Indians outfielder Choo Shin-soo hit a three-run homer to cap a five-run first and Yoon Suk-min allowed two runs on 6 1/3 innings as South Korea beat second-time participant Venezuela as Dodgers Stadium before an enthusiastic crowd of 45,378.

Ryu Tae-hyun added a two-run homer off losing pitcher Carlos Silva in the second inning for South Korea, which meets the winner of Sunday's semifinal matchup between defending PBC champion Japan and the United States for the title on Monday.

Yoon (2-0), a 22-year-old right-hander who went 14-5 with a 2.39 ERA for South Korea's KIA Tigers last year, mastered seven hits while walking one and striking out four. He allowed 13 hits and two runs in 16 innings with one walk and 13 strikeouts in four WBC outings.

Led by Miguel Cabrera, Magglio Ordonez, Bobby Abreu, Jose Lopez, Carlos Guillen, Melvin Mora and Ramon Hernandez, the Venezuelans had 12 hitters and 56 strikeouts but in their first seven games and outscored the opposition 39-11 while winning their previous five, including two over Team USA.

"I just wanted nothing against Yoon and the South Koreans, who put them away in the opening inning.

Silva (3-1) entered the semifinals having allowed just one run in 20 hits with one walk and six strikeouts in 11 innings over two WBC outings, but he didn't last long against the South Koreans, being chased after giving up six hits and seven runs, six earned, in 1 1-3 innings.

Lee Seung-yeop walked to begin the game and Jeong Keun-woo reached base when right fielder Alex Rios dropped his fly ball for an error—one of five committed by Venezuela after it made five in seven previous games, six of them wins. AP

KOBE Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers goes up for a dunk against the Chicago Bulls on a fastbreak play. AP

Cavs make it eight straight

CLEVELAND—MO WILLIAMS SCORED 24 points, LeBron James added 23 and the Cleveland Cavaliers rolled to their eighth straight win by 102-96 over the Atlanta Hawks in the NBA on Saturday.

The Cavs snapped the Hawks' seven-game winning streak in a game where coach Mike Woodson was ejected in the third quarter.

The Cavaliers improved to 52-1 at home and leave the best win-loss record in the league at 56-10.

Lithuania's Zydrunas Ilgauskas marked the 13,000 career point mark in the first period when he hit the first of two free throws. He scored 10 points.

Joe Johnson led Atlanta with 24 points.

In Chicago, the Los Angeles Lakers overturned a 14-point halftime deficit to beat the Bulls, 117-109, helped by Kobe Bryant's 28 points on Saturday.

Sprained Pau Gasol added 23 points and 10 rebounds for the Western Conference-leading Lakers (55-14), who leave the league's second-best record behind Eastern leader Cleveland (56-13).

Three other Lakers finished in double figures. Trevor Ariza had 18 as a reserve, Lamar Odom added 16 and Jordan Farmar had 15 in the first of seven consecutive road games for Los Angeles.

"They kind of overwhelmed us with their energy in the first half," Bryant told reporters. "We wanted to come out Lakers ball/Bucs ball for the game."

The Lakers reserves provided that spark to beat the Bulls.

"So many things went against us tonight—we could have easily lost west, 30-some, we'll get the next one," said Lakers guard Derek Fisher. "But guys off the bench came out with energy."

John Salmons had 20 points and Brad Miller scored 15 for the Bulls (30-38), who are trying to hold on to the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Despite the loss, Chicago is a game ahead of Charlotte and one and a half games in front of Milwaukee and New Jersey for the eighth spot.

The Lakers trailed 52-48 at the half but produced a 33-point third quarter to set the debut to its with carry-over left in the fourth quarter.

In Memphis, Jason Richardson scored 17 of his season-high 35 points in the third quarter as the team extended their winning streak to a season-high four games by clubbing the Washington Wizards, 128-96.

Shaquille O'Neal scored 13 for-nine Memphis (Mahmut at the No. 5 scorer in NBA history with 27,411 points).

In Memphis, Tennessee, Glen Davis scored a career-high 24 points on 8-of-11 shooting as Boston pulled away in the second half to crush the Grizzlies, 109-87.

NOTES TUNE RESULTS: Cleveland 102, Atlanta 96; Orlando 128, New York 102; Indiana 108, Charlotte 83; Boston 109, Memphis 87; Portland 96, Milwaukee 84; LA Lakers 117, Chicago 109; Phoenix 128, Washington 96

Murray ousts Federer, faces Nadal

INDIAN WELLS, CALIFORNIA—ANDY Murray beat Roger Federer for the fourth straight time, 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, to advance to the BNP Paribas Open final against Rafael Nadal on Saturday.

No. 4 Murray has won six of eight matches overall against No. 2 Federer.

The 21-year-old Scot will face Nadal after the Spaniard edged No. 7 Andy Roddick 6-4, 7-6 (4) in their semifinal.

Nadal said have another difficult match on Sunday against Murray, the 21-year-old Scot who's off to a career-best 20-1 start this year and already has won two tournaments.

"I think he's more focused all the time, he's more regular," Nadal said. "Before, he has one good match and he is the player one set well and two sets out of the same level.

"Right now he's playing all the time very solid and very organic. You look at his results the last seven, eight months, he's not doing to many 40-only losses against the best, and not a lot of times."

Nadal smiled and added, "I hope to recover."

Federer made some outstanding shots against Murray, but committed a whopping 32 unforced errors. AP

MURRAY Playing great AP

Buenavista, Fetalvero dominate Condura run

HEROES!!! Residents (second from left) accompanied by their physio, cloth prize and other gift items from Mayor Concepcion Duralde-cop honcho Anthony Concepcion (left), Condura vice chair Nonoy Dungca, Hortencia Argüelles, (third from left) and Patricia Concepcion during the awarding ceremony of the Condura Run for the Whale Sharks at the Global City.

By Cudelf Tapay

THERE'S NO STUFFING El-mando Buenavista and Marvelli-to Shaniel Fetalvero as they once again conquered the field to topping the 21-kilometers Condura Run for the Whale Sharks of Ormoc yesterday at the Global City in Taguig.

Buenavista and Fetalvero broke away by good at the turnaround point at Bo Hemway, which was included to the course for the first time in local running history.

Buenavista, a two-time Olympian, finished the race in over hours, 18 minutes and 39 seconds. Alley Quinay, a member of the Philippine Army, came in second at 1:20:52 while Crismolano Iubal settled for third place at 1:20:57.

Unknown in the Philippines for the past 18 years, Fetalvero submitted a time of 1:39:32 to beat by more than five minutes former University of the East standout Shaniel Magallan (1:24:49).

Aliber Talentino was third with a clocking of 1:31:28.

The winning pair likewise topped the 2008 Condura run, held to raise funds for the promotion of the Tubbataha Reefs in Palawan, and noted the co-owner SUMIT Tubbo as Gulfmount and the 2008 Mille Marathon.

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How to end billiards impasse

CLEAN LIVING

MANUEL P. MIGO

AS A LONGTIME BILLIARDS FAN, I suppose I can make a suggestion.

To end once and for all the leadership issue now bugging the entire Philippine billiards and bowling Congress of the Philippines, the two billiards bodies brought home to the country should select the officials of the BSCP.

In this way, these elected officials will represent the billiards stakeholders and not just any Tom, Dick and Harry. These qualified to vote should be model voters in the Asian-Games, the Southeast Asian Games and the other recognized international events.

Among them are Efren "Bata" Reyes, Marlon Manalo, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Roberto Gomez, Antonio Lining, Warren Kiamco, Sandy Mallo, Ronnie Villeran, Ian Tan Chi, Dennis Orcollo, Raymund Ababa, James Ongas, Felipe Tuyo Jr., Reynaldo Grandea, Jeremy Alba, Lee Sabordo, Leonardo Andam, Victor Arpilleda, Florencio Basas, Ana Basas, Jose Uy Jr., Alex Pagulayan, Ronnie Alcano, Dennis Orcollo, Rodolfo Luat, Rusmil Gallego, various players Dodong Nielo, Ed Pedalino, Mary Ann Basas and former Philippine champion, the ageless and now US-based Jose "Amang" Parico, who led the Filipinos' mission of the mid-seventies circuit.

I say this to save our country from losing face in the international billiards scene. Besides, no sports leaders have prevailed over the athletes in any dispute because the athletes are the ones earning medals, not the sports officials.

During the Marcos regime when Gaming Chief Brod Michael Elvas banned (but lifted) master Lydia de Vega's request for Gintong dito with cued her father-coach Tiburcio de Vega), President Marcos intervened and allowed Lydia's father to go and join her. The result: Lydia won gold medals for our country.

This time, the Philippine Olympic committee executive board has stepped into the billiards leadership issue. In a letter to the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines, the POC said it had decided not to recognize any of the contending groups while the leadership issue is unsettled. The POC added that in order to protect the interest of the athletes, it has created a Special Committee to attend to their needs until final resolution of the dispute."

Meanwhile, the country's top cuers and women players recently trooped to the POC and filed a letter of complaint that also sought the resignation of BSCP officials, principally president Emesto Fajardo and chair Vic Maladeniu.

The women players complained of verbal abuse and maltreatment by BSCP officials, saying they were dropped from the Philippine team and dropped of their winning allowances from the Philippine Sports Commission after the BSCP failed to endorse them to the PSC.

CONGRATULATIONS to veteran Emmanuel Reyes and Mario Bonto for topping the recent 2009 Cimen Sport Council of the Philippines' 8-ball-to-POC Cup 1st quarter ranking and competition at the Philsports Arena.

The Reyes-Bonto tandem won the gold medal in the Grade A-Standard category of the blue-ribbon event sponsored by Mike, PSC, POC, Department of Tourism, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Pagcor, Silver Zone, Savannah Mesa, MEDIF, Studio 116, Jax Institute, Mathlin Inshore, Mix Restaurant Bar Dance Café and Stallion 8 Domingo. My hats off too to TOM (Tim Outstanding Young Man) awardees Alcano for Cue Chat, Pinoy-time owner of Country Style, a popular coffee and donut house, at SM Hypermarket, for having in his empire friendly efficient and courteous staff headed by Jessica Mendiola, Christopher Angeles, Migs Salvador and Al Cruz. A warm hello also to Abigail Macalinao for her kind words to the Inquirer.

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LAOS SEA GAMES

Athletics 'good for 7-10 golds'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AT LEAST SEVEN GOLDS AND as many as 10 will be the target of the national track and field team in the Laos Southeast Asian Games in December.

Based on the progress of their training, national coaches Jesus Garcanas and Rosalyn Bareses predicted that the squad will surpass the five golds the country won in Thailand two years ago.

Barteses and Manuel made their prediction during the lineup launch last week where they were accompanied by long jump ace Henry Dagmil, who will go for a third straight gold in Laos.

The other Games defending champions are Asunil Pineda (hammer throw), Rene Herrera (3,000-meter steeplechase), Adlin Glenon (men's 400m run) and Mercedita Nuevo (long jump).

The PSF coaches said even the silver medalists in Thailand are ready to seal the gold this time, including Julius Semenuta in the 5,000m and 10,000m, Mary Grace Melgar in the 400 hurdles, Rose Villadiz in women's javelin throw, Danilo Fresnido in men's javelin, Deborah Sanoza in pole vault and Mabel Bigas in 800m.

At the same time, Dagmil believed relief for said were in distance sliding infighting among officials.

"There is too much politicking among our leaders, they succeed to leave forgotten about the athletes," Dagmil said.

Floro-Stehmeier eyes Sta. Elena Cup repeat

A PACKED POSTER OF 270 teams is bidding for top honors in the 24th staging of the Sta. Elena Cup members' game tournament starting Wednesday at the Sta. Elena Golf Club course in Cabuyao, Laguna.

Seeking a second straight overall title in the five-day tourney presided by Lotac and troops are Bones Floro and Eng Stehmeier.

They will have their hands full against a tough roster of challengers that includes reigning double-champs Ian Esteban and Sonny Jr. Iggi Quevedo and Matt Bechmeier, Blanding Chua and Alex Perez and Rodel Garcia and Orlando Garcia.

Lotac Manila is offering an 18,000, worth about P2.4 million, for a hole-in-one from the 16th and 17th holes.

Board Chairman, Bonet Trivel, Gidwalk Tipin, Sta. Elena Properties Inc, Johnson Wallet, Steelfast valves and Monaco are the other major sponsors of the Sta. Elena Cup.

It's the second straight year the organizing committee will adopt the "no-carry-no-accept-money policy," said Bryan Godcell, president of Sta. Elena.

Aaron Ledesma, Sta. Elena GM, said the course will be in its best possible shape.

Angeles-Hallare takes it

BELLETTO ANGELES AND Thomas Hallare returned the tournament's lowest net of 65 points and topped Division I of the season 6thatch tournament of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Angeles and Hallare bettered by a net point the 66 posted by Cesar Guerra and Elton Cruz, who emerged the Division II champion at the Pablo course.

Pete Hernandez and Lee Mercado aided Division II and Elan Yang-Ian-Lee Yang-John won the best gun in the ladies division.

A mini tweaker guest competition at the Nicerson layout saw Pianil Villanueva-Aural Perez and Pablo Villanueva-Annie Amore emerging as champions.

Villanueva and Perez edged Frederick Mercado and Milleen Bilcon in the semifinals for the men's division trophy after both finished with a 71, while Villanueva and Amore prevailed by five points with even 64.

Next up for members is the annual club championships.

Editor Raul G. Marvale ■ Assistant Editor Connie S. Martorina

BUSINESS

SM expansion to pick up pace this year

3 new malls, 16 supermarkets to be added in '09

By Dharel L. Lucas

MALL DEVELOPER AND OPERATOR SM PRIME HOLDings will open three more malls this year and expand two existing ones despite the tough business environment caused by the global economic crisis.

SM Prime will open this year SM City Naga in Camarines Sur, SM City Rosario in Cavite and SM City Puerto Princesa in Las Piñas City It will also open the Sky Garden at the newly expanded SM City North Edsa and will expand SM City Rosales in Pangasinan, according to a regulatory filing by parent firm SM Investments Corp.

The company earlier maintained that its 2009 expansion program would entail a capital outlay of at least P10 billion.

"By the end of the year, SM Prime will have 36 malls nationwide and three malls in China, with an estimated gross floor area of 4.9 million square meters," SMIC said, referring to the total space it could rent out to mall tenants.

Once completed, this year's expansion would mark a 3.4 percent increase in SM Prime's leasable floor area, which stood at 4.3 million square meters at the end of 2008.

Despite the deepening economic crisis, the company's mall expansion program this year is more faster than the 9-percent expansion it implemented last year when it added only 253,000 square meters to its total selling space.

The expansion plan is part of the company's thrust of opening smaller malls in more geographic locations nationwide, as opposed to its original thrust of building large malls in selected metropolitan centers.

Last year, SM Prime opened SM

IN THIS ISSUE

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■ Dell sells Pasay call center to Teleperformance /B7

Ortigas readies ₱20-B redevelopment of Greenhills

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE 16-HECTARE GREENHILLS Shopping Center will soon get more than just a facelift as the Ortigas group has mapped out a P20-billion redevelopment plan that will double its retail space for use.

Jerry Sianen, chief of Ortigas & Co.'s shopping mall division, said in an interview that the group has finished the renovation of almost all buildings in the prime shopping center except for Shoppersville.

"But the next step really is increasing floor area and adding shopping mall space," he said. "We now have 136,000 square meters of shopping area. We want to at least double that."

Doubling the retail area available for lease is also meant to increase the revenue stream of the shopping center, the cash cow of Ortigas & Co., a privately held upscale property developer. The Greenhills property—a very popular retail and entertainment center—pumps in about ₱1 billion in annual rental revenues each year.

Under the redevelopment plan, which will be rolled out over the next 10 to 15 years, Sianen said some of the old buildings would be torn down to give way to new ones. This will include the 40-year-old Uniwide grocery building.

"We will start with something this year. One of the first developments would be the new Music Museum, a 1,200-seat performing arts theater beside the Promenade. We'll build parking underneath that and that essentially starts the first phase," Sianen said.

He said the company would underdake the redevelopment of the Greenhills property on its own.

"We need to excess of P20 billion but we'll do it—like more [large-scale] developments 10-15 years," Sianen said.

Over the next three years, he said the group would likely spend about P1 billion for the

LOCAL STOCKS ARE SEEN TRADing in a tight range this week as investors consider other global financial developments.

Last week, the main share Philippine Stock Exchange index fell 1.2 percent, weighed down by jitters over PLDT's entry in Meralco. Investors likewise locked in gains following a rebound in Wall Street.

"Investors remains unclear on lenders would further develop charts in global markets after a US plan to buy back $300 billion worth of US treasuries," said Banco de Oro Unibank strategist Jonathan Ravelas.

Otherwise, he said the week's close at 1,050.00 suggested consolidation between 1,730 and 1,870 levels this week.

Eduardo Banaag, vice president at First Metro Investment Corp., said investors would likely remain jittery over PLDT stocks.

"Would-be holders of the stock will not sell because they believe that PLDT will have to spend more than what management has disclosed so far. In recent days, PLDT's management has told investors, on several occasions, that PLDT will not spend more," Banaag said.

"Sellers will not because the stock has lost the following of those who have invested in PLDT for a core telco play, yet the stock price is rising. Until PLDT can resolve this, the stock will stay de-rated.

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East Asia's message to G-20

MUCH ATTENTION IS BEING GIVEN TO THE April 2 Summit Meeting in London of the leaders of countries represented in the so-called Group of Twenty (G-20), who describe themselves as an informal grouping of finance ministers and central bank governors of "systemically important" industrialized and developing economies. Taken together, its member countries—actually numbering 19, not 20—account for 90 percent of global GNP/GDP, 80 percent of world trade, and two-thirds of the world's population. Asian countries represented by China, India, Indonesia, South Korea and Japan. Thailand has been invited to the London summit as well in its capacity as chair of the Asean this year.

There are mixed expectations on what the meeting can accomplish. Many are hoping that it will reach firm agreement on a concerted and convincing response, and future solutions, to the ongoing global financial crisis and economic downturn. But others are skeptical that the meeting will amount to much more than a photo opportunity.

US-EU debate

A key reason many don't expect much to come out of the summit is the much publicized disagreement between the United States and Europe on the key approach to the global problem. The Europeans are not convinced that the world needs more fiscal stimulus at this point (stimulation government spending to stimulate demand for goods and services, or tax cuts to spur more consumer and business spending). The United States and Japan are at the forefront of setting a clear target for a concerted fiscal stimulus, such as 2 percent of GDP.

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Cielito F. Habito

But the Europeans believe they have spent enough, and are not comfortable going into (even deeper debt to support additional stimulus. This, after all, is the implication of massive fiscal stimulus: It means trading off future spending by our children and grandchildren to be able to spend more today, and by doing so, hopefully revive the world economy from its worst slump in eight decades. But the exact gravity of the problem to be left to future generations is not well understood, for Filipinos know. The experience of the Philippines, weighed down in past decades by the overhang of Marcos-era debt, is illustrative of the burden to be left to future generations.

East Asia implications

The other worry is that the massive debt the United States is accumulating will have unwanted consequences even in the near future, not the least of which would be further collapse in the value of the US dollar and assets denominated in that currency. China, the single biggest holder of those assets, has (predictably) expressed alarm that US actions could lead to massive Chinese losses from their holdings of US dollar assets. There are indeed trillions of dollars of US debt already held by East Asian countries from past years of America's profligate spending.

On the other hand, it has also been argued that a large part of the coordinated stimulus need not be a burden to future generations if East Asia—particularly China and Japan—with their (low) pockets of dollar reserves, would do much of the desired spending. They can also facilitate it for their less-endowed neighbors by lending them cheap money to fund their own fiscal stimulus packages. This was the message conveyed by our economist Jeffrey Sachs in a recent lecture at the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Think tanks' messages

Last week, the ADB Institute, the Tokyo-based research and training arm of the multilateral lender, assembled representatives of Asian think tanks to craft a message to the Asian leaders who will attend the G-20 Summit. It is hoped that they would, in turn, convey the region's message to the rest of the G-20 leaders in London. I had the privilege of representing the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development in joining voices with the other economic think tanks to craft the message.

The group stressed that the current problem demands a collective response and solution, and unilateralistic and inward-looking solutions have no place in the required collective response. Thus, we warned against resurgent protectionism and competitive currency depreciations, which could only skew the recovery toward the larger countries at the expense of smaller developing economies like ours. In particular, the export-led economies of East Asia stand to be hardest hit by any protectionist moves by the United States and Europe. Next then, the group affirmed that East Asia must now rethink and remark the export-driven growth model that had propelled the region's economies in recent decades. At the face of a likely long-term change in American consumption behavior, we can no longer rely on exports as the primary engine for growth in the future.

The group also expressed support for a coordinated stimulus

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Bangko Sentral disputes negative forecasts on local banks

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) shrugged off forecasts that banks will be under stress this year given unfavorable economic conditions, expressing optimism that business challenges are not as tough as imagined and that the industry will remain profitable.

"Declining interest rates may put more pressure on the profitability of banks, but nowadays they have more sources of income," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said Friday in response to the "negative" outlook assigned by Moody's Investors Service on the country's banking sector.

Tetangco said banks in the country would still post decent net income this year, although probably smaller than last year's.

He said that while the income of banks from lending might adversely affected by falling interest rates, that would be partly offset by the continually growing demand for credit.

Citing latest BSP data, Tetangco said outstanding loans by commercial and universal banks grew 18.8 percent to P2.1 trillion in January from a year ago. The latest growth is lending was actually faster than the 17.1 percent registered in December, he said.

Tetangco also said that banks in the country have diversified their sources of income to include fee-based services. The fact that consumer issuance of bonds have been on the rise means that income of banks from consumer loan have also been growing, he said.

"These may be a downside resulting from lower interest rates, but the upside is the increase in fee-based activities," Tetangco said.

In its outlook on the Philippine banking sector released last week, Moody's—one of the credit rating agencies also being blamed for the financial meltdown in Wall Street—said declining interest rates and a projected contraction in remittances sent by overseas Filipinos would reduce the income-generating capacity of banks in the country.

Besides lending, banks have also con-

PLDT buys back more shares

Stock price dip enables telco to move

By Dianne L. Lucas

THE PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE Telephone Co., the country's largest telecommunications firm, has bought back some of its own stock amid a sharp drop in share prices that followed the announcement of its deal to buy into the Manila Electric Co.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, PLDT said that it had acquired 120,000 shares through the bourse at a share price of P3,980 apiece, for a total consideration of P257.4 million.

The move was made in line with the company's share buyback program that its board had approved in August 2008 to take advantage of the weakness in PLDT's share price.

To date, the company has so far repurchased 2,341,256 shares under the program at various prices since it was implemented. As PLDT's latest closing price of P3,965 a share, this block of shares that the company has taken out of circulation would be worth P4.2 billion.

Last month, the company said it plans to buy back an additional two million of its own shares from the local bourse and the American stock market this year to preserve the value of the shares amid volatile trades.

"We don't discriminate between ADRs (American Depositary Receipts, or PLDT shares listed abroad) or PLDT shares," PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan said. "We bought so far two million [shares] and there can further authorization from the board for another 2 million shares."

At current prices, the buyback program for this year will entail an additional outlay of approximately P4.0 billion.

A share buyback program helps support stock prices by reducing the number of shares available to the general public on the open market. According to the firm, it also demonstrates the company's confidence in the inherent value of its shares.

In the past, Pangilinan has made it a point to buy shares of PLDT for his personal holdings whenever its stock price suffers sharp drops, partly to publicly stress his confidence in the firm.

In the days following the group's announcement that it had acquired a 30-percent stake in Meralco from the Lopez family, PLDT's share price tumbled from P2,270 to P1,870—wiping out an estimated P46 billion in market capitalization. It has since recovered some of that value.

St. Luke's sets aside P1B for improvements

By Abigail L. Ho

ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER IS earmarking aside up to P1 billion this year to improve its facilities and bring in new healthcare technologies.

In an interview, St. Luke's president and chief executive Jose Ledesma said the amount would be used not just for renovations and also improvements, but also for staff training.

"We want to always be one step ahead of the competition," Ledesma said. "The Philippines has to be Asia's hospital due to factors (that) 95 percent of hospitals in the (is)."

But this year, he said St. Luke's would continue to beef up all its fields of specialization, particularly cancer, neurology and neuroscience, heart, digestive, liver diseases and ophthalmology.

St. Luke's last week unveiled its recently purchased Philips 256-slice computed tomography (CT) system.

According to St. Luke's Heart Institute director Ramon Sarmiento, the Philips Brilliance iCT scanner generates higher accuracy rates that will help doctors determine what exactly is wrong with a patient's heart.

In a related development, the Danish firm behind the sale of the CT scanner to St. Luke's hopes to strike similar deals with other hospitals in the country.

Gerard Klotzerieter, Royal Philips Electronics president and chief executive, said the sale was part of the company's goal to become the world's leading health and wellbeing brand.

"More than the business, it's how the technologies we produce are helping people and communities," he said. "We want to help doctors provide better help to their patients. We understand what needs to be done, and we want to make healthcare accessible and affordable to all."

East Asia's ...

From page B1

effort that will ensure inclusive and sustainable growth, emphasizing infrastructure investment, environmental improvements and social sector protection. He also urged leaders to take concrete measures to ease shortages of foreign exchange, trade financing and credit to clients to ensure broad-based recovery itself the group called for fundamental reform of the international financial architecture, where East Asia must assume new prominence in the governance of international financial institutions commensurate to the region's now widely acknowledged predominance in the global economy.

The world needs East Asia, said the coming G-20 summit is an opportunity for our region to claim the influence it deserves in shaping the world economy.

Comments welcome at dlucas@bworld.ph.

Bangko ...

From page B1

mostly engaged in the remittance business. But Mendiy's said job and wage cuts abroad could lead to lower income of OFWs and a consequent drop in remittances.

Tetangco agreed the global crisis could cause a dip in remittances, but he said the BSP did not believe these would continue this year.

Based on the BSP's projections, remittances this year would reach last year's $14.4 billion. This would be enough not only to spur consumption but also to keep banks' remittance business profitable, Tetangco said.

Interest rates (charged by banks before distributing the money) the move of the BSP to cut its own key policy rates. Since December, the BSP's overnight borrowing and lending rates, used as benchmarks by banks, have been lowered by 125 basis points to 4.75 and 6.75 percent.

SM expansion ...

From page B1

City Manitoba, SM City Bellevue and the SM Supermarket Bonifacio, while it expanded The Annex in SM City North Edsa—making it the third-biggest mall in the world—and The Outlets in SM Megamall.

SM Prime operates 33 malls around the country as well as three malls in Xiamen, Jinjiang and Chengdu, China.

At the same time, SMIC added that its supermarket unit was planning to add 16 more outlets and five "hypermarkets" in 2009 as part of its expansion plan.

Again, this came in lower than that set in 2008 which saw SM supermarkets open in Edsa- Pasay, Parkmall Cebu, Dagupan, Marikina, Taytay, North Edsa 2 and Cubao, in addition to two hypermarkets.

The retail selling area of SM supermarkets and hypermarkets stands at 256,807 and 162,316 square meters, respectively.

SMIC also owns the "Makro" warehouse club chain—which currently has 14 stores—through its parent holding company Raypal Holdings Inc. The total net selling area of Makro is 107,935 square meters.

Stocks ...

From page B1

which means that the price per share of the stock will be lower than what it cared to be," Tetangco said.

The most recent strength in local bank share prices would likely lose steam, Banaag said, projecting that values among bank shares would vary.

He said Metrobank would likely outperform because its valuation was nearing its bottom while BPI would underperform.

"To the extent that the rally in UB financial shares is capped by the unrealized gains of their balance sheets, the rally in local bank shares will likewise be capped. This is not to imply that the performance of local bank shares is fundamentally aided by the performance of UB financial shares," he said.

Doris C. Bonoan

Ortigas ...

From page B1

initial stage of development.

Ramon added that the Greenhills corner has not felt the pinch yet from the much-anticipated slowdown in consumer spending, linked to the global economic recession this year.

He noted that Greenhills' supermarkets, the bellwether of consumer spending in the area, had even generated higher sales in the first few months of this year compared to last year.

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Maybank

₱2.4-B luxury hotel in Pasay opening in H2

Project expected to create 2,000 jobs

THE ₱2.4-BILLION MAGSAYSAY HOTEL AT the Newport City Cyber Tourism Economic Zone in Pasay City is set to open in the second half. It is expected to create 2,000 new jobs.

"This responds to the growing need for luxury travel services in the country, where we have seen a steady growth of European tourists seeking more specialized services," Tourism Undersecretary Eduardo Jacque Jr. said in a statement over the weekend.

According to the Department of Tourism, more and more "niche travelers" have been coming in the country over the past four years to sample what the country had to offer in terms of eco-tourism, adventure, health and wellness, and luxury vacations.

Tourism Secretary Joe Durano said these times of crisis were the best times to invest in niche tourism activities, particularly luxury resorts.

"These are times to tap niche markets, where there is much dynamism. Luxury travelers look for distinct things all the time," he said.

The entry of Magsaysay Hotel into the country, he said, was "justified by the DOT's commitment to be the 'hottest' gaming and gambling service to travelers while in the country. We commend Magsaysay Hotel's worthy investment in the Philippines and their pledge to guarantee an enjoyable travel experience."

Magsaysay Hotel operator Vice President Peter Favila said the soon-to-open luxury hotel would feature 172 junior and king suites, three presidential villas and one presidential suite.

All of these suites and villas would be equipped with private outdoor Jacuzzis and gardens.

Magsaysay Hotel vice president Raul Ramoso said that the luxury establishment would also provide its guests with personal butlers "to ensure exclusive service," adding that t... the ...

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INFOTECH

Simple, no frills camera

Text and photos by Charles E. Rubio

SAY YOU ALREADY OWN A very capable digital SLR camera and even spent money on additional lenses and external flash units so you could broaden your shooting capabilities.

But admit it or not, there's a bit cumbersome to carry around every time.

And if there's no need need to take professional-grade photos, you would certainly appreciate carrying an inexpensive compact camera that you can easily take out of your pocket whenever you find yourself needing to record a moment.

Enter Canon's Powershot G10's GE D560 double-life compact camera.

At P9,495, this camera could be regarded as a bargain, considering that it offers features available only in more expensive ones—some semi-basic ones, point-and-shoot cameras, such as manual controls, image processing, electronic image stabilization as well as a red-eye removal.

SIMPLICITY: a D560's main selling point.

HQ and 640x480 size "cinematic camera" are easy to make used.

THE D560's 37 mm-140 mm lens extends 2.5 cm further out from its skeer (2.2 cm) body.

Metal body

The D560's body is made of metal (aluminum) and stainless steels, tough enough to tell behind countless times.

Picture-wise, this camera could deliver sharp images, thanks to a 1/2.5-inch CCD sensor that delivers up to 8 megapixels. Its 4x zoom lens is 37 mm at 35 related and zooms up to 148 mm (35mm equivalent).

The control interface is also fairly generic but, again, this is not really a bad thing, since these often-used design ideas tend to work best, not to mention they eliminate complexities.

Mode mode selection is via a large right-position dial which is positioned so that it also serves as a thumb-rest.

A lot easier

The EE D560 also made shooting a lot easier, with its 12 pre-programmed modes that automatically give the best exposure and settings for a particular scene. Specialized "Scene" shooting options, dubbed Auto (flash is disabled), Indoor, Low Light, Color Accent (only one color is also given when taking pictures, amid white inside of the beach), Snow, Fireworks, Foliage (subject is behind transparent glass), Museum (enhances available light shots flash is disabled), Landscape, Night Landscape (low-set shutters speed is used on tripod) is two-in-one, standard, and night portrait. Think for close-up subjects.

Before that did to do away from tweaking exposure compensation, choosing flash modes, engaging macro mode and self-timer) directional pad with a central function menu and DISPLAY button.

The 2.7 inch viewing screen may not be the sharpest or the biggest but it performs its job in composing a shot or in viewing the menu options.

So how does the EE D560 fare against the competition?

For a tab P18,000 camera, the D560 is really quite good. Image quality is much better than the earlier Ixus series model.

The camera's vulnerabilities: the photos "needles is better much of the time." The D560's affordable price tag, point-and-shoot simplicity and fully automatic controls are its main selling points.

After all, if you think your next photo shooting fare would require more creativity on your part, you could always bring out the SLR and your arsenal of lenses and lighting systems.

Cyber-shot DSC-S950: One hot pink digicam

By Raquel P. Gomez

DETERMINED TO WIN THE hearts of the young women, Sony recently launched Cyber-shot DSC-S950, a pink 10.1 megapixel point-and-shoot digicam.

A thing of beauty, this gadget blends well with polished long nails and a glitzy black handbag. It definitely suits young females who just love to take lots of photos and videos for their social networking websites.

Like other Sony digital cameras, the DSC-950 features Sun-Obsidian technology, which helps produce sharper, precise shots and ensures the lens is lit properly. It has a red eye correction technology and stylish, the intensity of which can be lowered or increased.

Its brushed pink body is surely eye-catching. Not everything is pink though, as a silver metal finish covers the underside of the body.

The camera has a big prominent lens covered with sturdy metal flaps as well. The lens features 4x optical zoom and focal length of 35-133 mm. Shutter speed is from 1/30 sec. to 1/2000 seconds, while aperture opening ranges from 2.5/3.5-8.

Similar to other point-and-shoot digital cameras that always donned the viewfinder and opted for a bigger LCD screen, the Cyber-shot DSC-S950 has a 2.7-inch LCD screen. It covers almost three fourths of the back portion of the camera, while the remaining portion holds the zoom button, mode dial, menu button, display and delete buttons, and the big multi-function control button for manipulating the focus, flash, timer and display settings, which also functions as browser button for photos on display.

On top are the power and shutter buttons, and three small holes that serve as tiny-hole microphone for recording voice when the camera is on video mode.

On the right side are ports for external power supply and a USB cable for transferring photos directly to the computer. The USB interface can also be used for the supplied dedicated A/V cable for direct viewing of photos and videos on the television.

SONY Cyber-shot DSC-S950

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Also for rechargeable lithium ion battery, memory slots and a tripod socket found at the bottom part.

The DSC-S950 is so easy to use. One can even skip reading the manual. Just pick the mode you want to use in the dial mode button and start snapping.

Shooting modes offered by this camera include program auto, auto adjustment, easy shooting, high sensitivity, scene selection, DCFS, and movie.

Program auto allows one to shoot with the exposure adjusted automatically for both the shutter speed and the aperture value. With the mode, you can further adjust other settings using the menu button.

Using the SCN mode, you can further select several settings, like soft snap (shoot a portrait this with warmer look), landscape, twilight portrait (shoot image images of people in dark place), twilight, beach and snow (shoot scenes in white background) more closely).

The DSC-S950 produces photos with 10 MP but you can configure the size of the still images to suit your purpose (or 2MP for display purposes on HDTV.

The DSC-950 retails at P12,999 at all Sony Centers and comes with a free case and dongle for memory stick duo accessories.

Panasonic turns 'green'

By Rica T. Dichoso

PANASONIC IS GETTING IN TOUCH with its "green" side.

During the recently-concluded Asia Pacific International Fair 2009 at the SM Convention Center in Pasay City, the Japanese company showed off products complying with Guidance on lead-free, energy-efficient appliances such as light bulbs, cameras, plasma TVs, airconditioners, refrigerators and washing machines that give the environment a break.

Panasonic unveiled its Evolta battery, which is officially claimed was certified by the Guinness World Records as the longest-lasting Ni-Alkaline battery.

For lighting solutions, Panasonic presented the FeLook Ball Premium Q (25), compact fluorescent light bulbs. It is a hybrid light bulb that uses a "quick lamp" to help it reach full brightness 50 percent faster than other fluorescent bulbs. It also lasts for 10,000 hours.

For gadget freaks, Panasonic unveiled the DMC-FX35 Lumix digital camera, which contains 2D picture but power than previous models. The camera is 8 percent lighter than previous models and is free of hazardous materials.

Among home appliances, the dishwasher maker highlighted its TR-SW9500 TV panel. Officials said the panel does not contain hazardous materials, including lead and mercury. It was made by using less lighter without sacrificing the life span of the display and used Sanitized Blue in its TV speakers.

Being the leader in split-type airconditioners, Panasonic also went green with the CU-2S-91BKH inverter air conditioner.

Panasonic sales and marketing manager Rhynald Dedel said the inverter helps improve air quality in the air conditioners to use half of the energy that traditional models use. The CS-VU09BKH also uses a refrigerant called R410 gas, variable time, limited to the environment than chlorofluorocarbon (CFC).

Another appliance that uses the inverter technology is the NN-S685WF/WF refrigerator. It uses Panasonic's advanced vacuum insulation panels that perform better than urethane insulation materials. This, coupled with the inverter technology, reduces electricity consumption by 20 percent. The model also has a large vegetable case to encourage a healthier lifestyle.

Finally, Panasonic presented the NA-F90T1 WebM washing machine, which efficient said performs 20 percent faster and consumes 40 percent less power.

Panasonic said that by using energy efficient products that do not use lead, mercury and other unsafe materials, consumers will be able to help reduce carbon-dioxide emissions.

"Giving consumers eco-friendly options is one more way to help the environment besides reducing our carbon footprint and supporting environmental activities, which we are also doing," sales group general manager Jeff Piccard said.

Piccard added that Panasonic aims to reduce its global carbon dioxide emissions by 300,000 tons over the next three years.

Outdoor Bluetooth speaker offers superior sound quality

SONY ERICSSON RECENTLY INTRODUCED the trendy Outdoor Wireless Speaker MS500, a colorful and powerful Bluetooth speaker that boasts of superior sound quality and cool design.

"If I had to describe the MS500 speaker in three words, I would use the following: fun, convenient and functional. The word function has various meanings, as it refers to the speaker's lightweight, sturdy, splash proof shell, which enables you to take it with you everywhere and anywhere. Its rubber allow freedom of movement and a handy strap enables you to hang it from the waist or attach it to clothing, so you have the ability to carry it conveniently," said Emmanuelle Richards, MS500 designer.

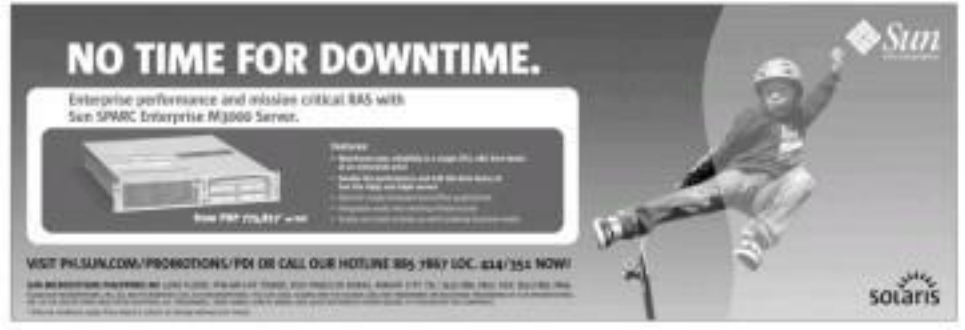
Available in orange, black, chic white and pink, the MS500 speaker is small enough to fit into the palm of a hand and very light at 315 grams only battery, too. It can be taken anywhere.

The speaker is designed for the outdoor environment with a durable splash-proof shell and a handy strap.

The Bluetooth technology enables a phone to be used in a remote control to change tracks and increase volume, allowing listeners to just sit back and relax with music without the need to move. Connect the speaker to any mobile headset within a 10 meter range and in just seconds, the songs play will be clear treble and rich bass.

It is powered by two Ag batteries, which allow up to five hours of music play.

The Outdoor Wireless Speaker MS500 is compatible with most Bluetooth phones from Sony Ericsson and other brands.



Dell sells Pasay call center to Teleperformance

Tech firm's QC facility also said to be up for sale

By Abigail L. Ho

DELL HAS SOLD ITS PASAY contact center to Teleperformance, in a bid to "increase the efficiency of its business and provide better value for customers."

The sale, the value of which Dell declined to disclose, would transfer management of Dell's customer self-support business in the Philippines to Teleperformance.

"We appreciate the contributions of our Pasay team and will do all we can to make the transition seamless," Dell global customer services vice president Ganesh Lakshminarayanan said in a statement. "It is a mutual win that our Pasay team will continue supporting Dell customers through Teleperformance. We also continue to remain committed to the Philippines directly through our various operations in the Quezon City site."

While Dell said its Quezon City business was not part of the sale, an industry source said this, too, would also be put up for sale.

Dell management gave its Pasay employees notice of the sale on Friday morning.

According to news circulating on various call center blogs and online forums, employees were given only four days to decide whether they would stay or leave.

Should they decide to stay, they would be absorbed by Teleperformance as regular probationary employees, or personnel who would have the benefits of regular employees but would be subject to evaluation for three to six months.

Employees, whether they decide to stay or leave, will receive half a month's salary for every year of service.

An employee of Dell's Quezon City office wrote in a blog that news of the sale was nothing short of "devastating."

BIR told to explain 'illogical' figures

By Rocmel W. Domingo

THE BUREAU OF INTERnal Revenue needs to explain the discrepancies in the collection of the value-added tax (VAT) and income tax, according to the Department of Finance.

Data from the BOC, BIR's parent agency, show that VAT collections in 2008 reached only P140.32 billion, P64.55 billion or 31.1 percent lower than the target of P204.88 billion.

On the other hand, income tax collections amounted to P482.25 billion or 4.7 percent higher than the target of P477.53 billion.

Finance Undersecretary Gil S. Beltran said the numbers were "illogical," considering that changes in collections for both taxes should move along the same direction.

"The VAT is simply income plus compensation of employees," Beltran said. "So, if income tax were up, VAT should also rise. This is what we have been asking the BIR to explain."

Also, data from the BOC showed that the oil price spike last year boosted incremental revenue from the reformed VAT in the 10 months to October which, at P80.28 billion, already exceeded the year-ago comparative revenue of P69 billion.

Property firms cash in on BPO boom

THE REAL ESTATE SECtor is expected to cash in on the business process outsourcing boom, with BPO-related earnings seen to range between P250 million and P375 million this year.

David Young, managing director of real estate services firm Colliers International in the Philippines, said BPO companies would need at least 500,000 square meters of space this year to allow them to accommodate projected growth in headcount in 2009.

For good, functional space in urban areas, he said, lease rates could be between P600 to P650 per square meter; for offices in the provinces, the lease rate could be around P400 per square meter, Young said.

Considering these current rates, he said real estate developers could expect to generate between P250 million and P375 million this year from the BPO sector.

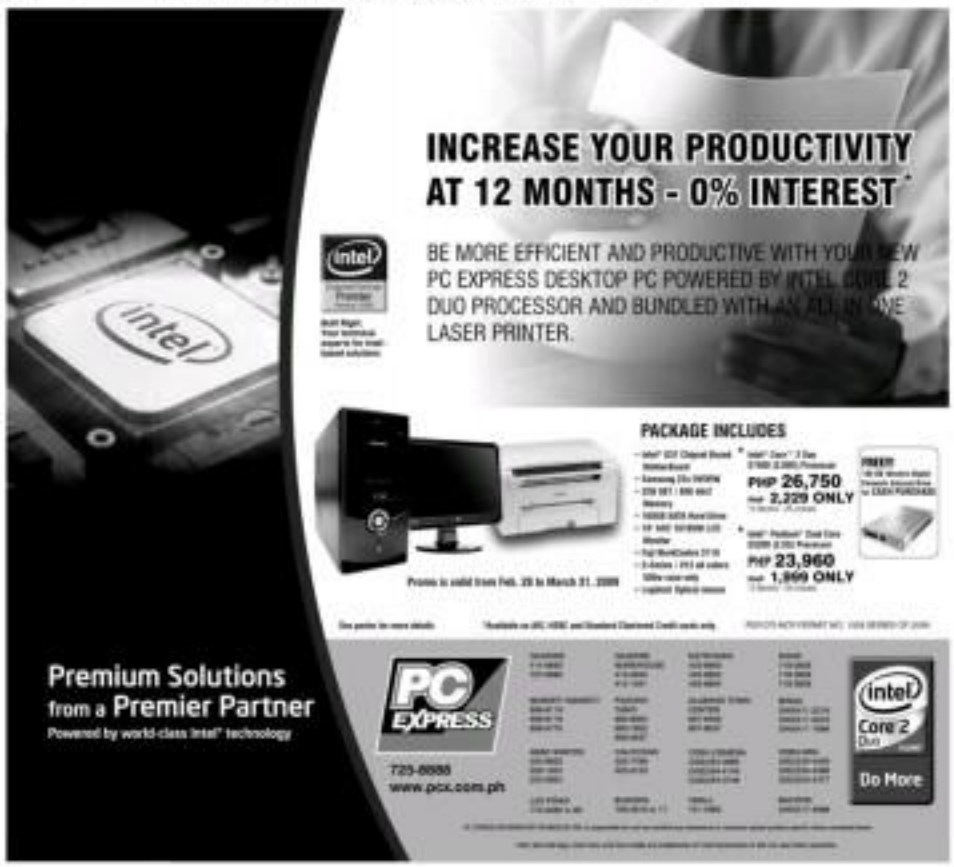
The vast majority of BPO firms, he said, would still flock to Metro Manila.

"But the proportion (in favor of the provinces) has risen dramatically," Young said, from 60-40 to 70-30 to favor of Metro Manila.

"Suburban areas are also getting more attention from BPO companies," he added.

Young explained that five years ago, before the local BPO sector really started to boom, there were a lot of good office spaces available in Metro Manila such as Makati and Ortigas at relatively low rates.

"But now there is hardly any more available space in those areas. If there are available office spaces, they are really expensive. So now we're seeing a lot of new developments in suburban areas such as Alabang, University of the Philippines (in Diliman) and World (in Laguna)," he said. "The choice of location is really user-driven. You take the facility where the labor is." Abigail L. Ho



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Business Features Editor Margie Quiogue-Espino

How to cut costs in a recession

Key is not to be penny wise, but pound foolish

By Rene T. Borromeo
Contributor

TECHNICALLY, YOU DO NOT CUT cost,—you cut waste or "unnecessary cost."

Unnecessary costs are due to excess capacity and inefficient use of resources. There will always be necessary "costs of doing business" you would want to keep—not lose you plan to close shop.

"Some are inhouse-retained costs that create value and assure quality service, safety and compliance to regulatory standards.

"Cost-cutting" is, therefore, a misguided if not dangerous concept that should be replaced by the more pragmatic "waste-cutting."

The challenge is how to quickly and accurately distinguish the necessary from the unnecessary costs. Cost reduction programs without this roadmap are doomed to cut necessary costs while maintaining the unnecessary ones.

It follows that companies with continuous improvement programs are more resourceready than they are adept at separating waste-adding from waste-adding processes.

The typical cost cutter in the company is like that mythical sword by the Irish writer Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) as one who "knows the price of everything and the value of nothing."

Unless he knows what is wasteful and what is valuable in the company, in spite of knowing all the costs, he will not be able to quickly and sharply cut costs. Chances are, he will be cutting the wrong costs.

We are familiar with a cost reduction program that instructs across-the-board slashing of costs (e.g., budgets, head count) by a fixed amount, which has absolutely no basis. For example, "all divisions must cut their operative operating costs (or management) by 10 percent within six months or else ..."

This mindless roundup serves no purpose but to introduce all cost heads into streamlining for unrelated harm (among which some golden geese may inadvertently be included) to offer to cheat the deadline. On the other extreme, this order from the top may allow unit heads to perpetuate their wasteful ways, which may account for much more than 10 percent of their operating costs.

HOW TO CUT COSTS | B2-3

UP in contemporary Philippine society

MAPping the Future
Nicets S. Poblador

THE UP CHARTER OF 2008 recognizes the University of the Philippines as the country's National University, and provides it with considerable financial independence.

It corrects the deficiencies of many of its earlier provisions which, over the years, have lost their relevance and ceased to be effective in meeting the changing needs of the University and its constituencies.

However, there remain certain provisions of the law which I find disquieting.

Purpose

Section 5 (d) affirms the University's role as a dispenser of social services "... by providing various forms of community public and volunteer services ..." I have long argued that the University in the New Millennium: The Society Road Ahead) that the University's sole function for society is to perform its unique and distinctive leadership in higher education and development."

Law is designed to accommodate many other activities in which it has no distinctive competencies, the University should concentrate on developing and disseminating the knowledge capabilities that are essential for society's survival and sustained development. There are other institutions that are far better equipped to provide social services.

Section 11 guarantees the University's autonomy in the hiring of, formally, at least six budgetary and administrative matters. However, under the present setup, its internal governance remains to be very much under the influence of the political leadership.

For example, most of the members of the University's governing body, the Board of Regents (BOR), are either elected officials or appointees of the President. The latter including the University president.

Ideally, the governing board of any organization should supervise—and be directly governed by—those who "own" the organization and who have a direct interest in its activities. In public-held corporations, these are the shareholders (known as the "principals").

They elect among themselves those whom they wish to oversee the organization and to make certain that the appointed managers and administrators (their "agents") pursue activities that are consistent with their interests.

This is obviously not the case with the University. What we have is a situation where members of Philippine society, the citizens of the land who "own" their historic University, have nothing or very little say in choosing the ones and trustees who will run it. This is left to their surrogates, the men and women whom they have elected into public office.

Political agenda

There is little reason to believe that these elected officials and their appointees will have the interests of society and those of the University in mind in their performance duties as regents.

More likely than not, their political agenda, if not their personal interests, will prevail over those of society and of the University.

This situation illustrates a classic case of the incentive problem, which I have noted elsewhere to be most severe and harmful in the public than in the private sector.

In pursuing their mandated tasks, these little likelihood that the University administration who owes their positions to the appointing powers will make choices that are contrary to the preferences of their patrons.

In sum, there is a real tendency for University administrators to feel accountable, at least in part, to their benefactors rather than to the faculties and relentless interests of our society to whom they should be ultimately answerable.

Section 11 defines the powers and duties of the BOR. These include review of university manager, need which, to my mind, the BOR, as constituted is not in the best position to make, such as those having to do with curriculum matters, noteworthy organizations and appointments to academic positions.

There, I think, are best left to the men and women who are more knowledgeable on such matters—the faculty.

Ideally the membership of the BOR should be expanded beyond its current limited number, and its composition broadened so as to shade the wider spectrum of the sciences, the disciplines and the professions, as well as special interest groups in society.

As presently composed, the BOR has 11 members (compare this with Harvard's 109): all of whom appointed to the body by virtue of their current positions in government or in the University, and not their expertise and knowledge relevant to society.

On the whole, the University Charter of 2008 is relatively silent on the critical role of the faculty, the University constituency entrusted with the relevant knowledge, competencies, skills and who are most authoritative on the educational needs of Philippine society and the academic programs that are most relevant to these needs.

Faculty

They are the ones whose competencies need to be guaranteed, so to speak, and who are the most knowledgeable on all aspects of their academic and administrative roles. By their very choice of teaching and academic work in their vocation, they are, to my mind, the ones to whom we must look in order to see if the University is working to the intellectual uplift of Philippine society.

They have to be ruthless, chiefly. Empowering them, and creating a work environment that is conducive to creative, innovative and personally satisfying work will result in a more dynamic, self-upgrading, value-creating organization that the University is entrusted to be.

(The article reflects the personal experience of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is vice chair of the MAP Institutions and Advocacy Research Committee, an active academic, and a knowledge management consultant. Feedback: mapi@globelines.com.ph)

How to cut costs in a recession

From page B2-1

An effective and informed cost reduction scheme is neither conservative nor aggressive. It is effectively appropriate, motivated and opportunity-seeking in nature. It is about cutting the right costs at the right time and at the right places.

For instance, if a unit has 40-percent senior, a 10-percent cost reduction goal will be deficient. When times of the recession, as in an economic crisis, you would want to immediately and decisively slash 40 percent of its costs—not by trial and error or long-term installment.

Butcher's surgery

On the other hand, for a business unit that is already lean, with, say, 2-percent idle capacity or inefficiency tolerating, a 10-percent cost reduction would be tantamount to a botched surgery that removes vital kills both the healthy and diseased organs.

For example, let us take two departments with 10 and 100 staff respectively. A mandatory 10-percent head count reduction mandates that we have to let go one staff. After the exercise, the first department, which was already lean and just moving its service level targets, ceases to function or serve its clients.

The second department suffers no loss in output, since its excess personnel was actually 30. In general, the larger the department, the larger the numbers would become of the larger feeling places.

The cost reduction targets must not be uniform across-the-board, but be based on the unique concern or savings potential of each business unit.

But that task is easier said than done.

> The challenge is to accurately distinguish necessary from unnecessary costs

It requires a profound knowledge of the process and "deep dive" process and product cost analysis. It cannot be implemented and led by just accountants and the finance staff. It requires teaming up with those with hands-on process knowledge—such as industrial engineers, process engineers and production staff.

In one study when a call center tried to reduce its agents from 3.6 to 3.0 or by about 15 percent, the number of callers willing to get through jumped exponentially from 0 to more than 200. Unless cost centers are thoroughly familiar with the process and particularly queuing theory in this case, they may exceed the critical point (bandwidth) and reach the tipping point that will jeopardize the entire business.

Unarmed and dangerous

Typical cost cutters, usually bean-counting finance personnel, are "unarmed and dangerous." They may let too flat or too slow.

A cost accounting report, known as cost variance analysis, measures the difference between actual costs of products and their standard costs—considering mainly of standard labor cost and standard material costs. Cost variance analysis has weak spots inherent to standard cost reduction.

First, reduction or elimination of unfavorable variances may not be sufficient to effect revenue-related losses or shortfalls. Second, cost heads of budget-driven companies may think that the ultimate and maximum cost reduction goal is the achievement of standard costs or elimination of unfavorable variances. Variance analysis focuses cost consciousness, rather than the cost reduction needed in a recession.

Third, the company may have embedded inefficiencies in standard costs and budgets, effectively hiding and disallocating wastes. Process owners will think that having favorable variances (or spending less than budget) is just an option or a "nice to have," rather than an urgent "must do" which would be the case had their wastes been more visible from accounting records. In a recession, it is urgent to cut both actual costs and standards costs.

Fourth, a cost variance component may be traced to other sources, thus discouraging us to admit to the inherent deficiency or inefficiency. For instance, material cost variance is a composite of price variance and usage variance. Any unfavorable material cost variance from excessive usage due to low yields and poor quality can actually be erased or hidden by a favorable price variance through the discovery of a cheaper supplier.

Cost accounting tool

A more recent cost accounting tool is ABC or activity-based costing. Originally, ABC was conceived to improve the accuracy of the allocation of fixed cost among different product lines by basing the allocation on the activities/drivers or cost drivers that determine individual products usage of the fixed cost.

Conceptually, ABC is very efficient, actually based on direct labor content, has led to mistakes in costing and pricing of products. ABC has greatly solved this issue and improved pricing, product mix and profit planning. However, if we are ABC is originally intended to, synonymous accuracy of costing, rather than to cut cost, it will be just as useless in cost reduction and think-tanking exercises. It doesn't help much if ABC will tell you accurately tell you that all your products are losing money during this economic downturn.

At most, it will tell you how your business will collapse. If used as a cost reduction tool instead of just an allocation tool, however, ABC can be your life-saver. Remember in a recession, demand drops rapidly and you would want to quickly lower your breakeven sales and fixed costs, so you can get profitability at selected price-level sales levels.

Since ABC has determined the drivers of fixed costs, you can go straight to these cost drivers and reduce them systematically.

ABC can save you precious time. Instead of reducing the fixed costs themselves in panic, you right away attack their root causes like delivery which drive up quality control costs. However, you don't cut costs, you cut the drivers of unnecessary costs.

A simple but powerful statistic of efficiency to guide the cost reduction progress of a labor-intensive company is the ratio of direct labor to indirect labor which many Japanese companies use.

Essentially, work done by direct labor is presumed to be value-adding since it is directly applied on the product and becomes part of product cost, while indirect labor (which does not touch the product but necessary support) direct labor in doing its task is presumed to be non-value-adding.

Therefore, the higher the ratio, whether labor is expressed in cost or head count, the better or the more efficient the process is.

You can benchmark your ratio with those of world-class companies, or if you can't, just make sure your company's direct labor ratio continuously goes up, and not down. An increase in this ratio means you are streamlining or even losing relatively your value-added activities.

Excess capacity

Usually, in reducing labor cost, it is better to look first for waste and excess capacity in indirect labor. Wastes are rarely hidden in direct labor (imply because it has no direct accountability to business volume. You may go beyond the productivity-related accounting definition of direct and indirect labor.

In sales, do not hesitate to cut your sales force in direct sales assignments and limit sales manpower. This index recognizes sales people as value-adding and all other staff in sales and marketing as non-value-adding. In general, consider everyone in the company who is doing indirect work or those who are neither producing nor selling as non-value-adding. This includes manager level, the most expensive indirect labor. This is where you begin your labor cost reduction and touch for wastes.

With, or without a recession, continuous cost (waste) reduction must be done as a strategy to make your business stock robust. During good times and times, are easier to cope with the inflationary increase in material and labor costs, unexpected supplier price increase, customer price discount request, competitive pressures on price and cost increase due to unplanned product proliferation demanded by your marketing department.

Remember if you lose cost leadership, you lose price leadership, and then market leadership.

Finally, what is the number-1 all enemy? It is nothing not in a business that is not visible to the first place. It is better to shut it down than spend time making it more efficient in producing unreliable, incompetitive products or services.

Never waste your time nothing unessential waste in a business that is unrecognized by market.

(Boris T. Domingo is a professor and management consultant. Please send comments to rt3@pldt.net.ph)

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ANZ

Making better managers with the help of HR

By Gina M. Hechanova
Contributor

WORKPLACE WISDOM

THE WORLD OF HUMAN RESOURCE management is fast changing. On one hand, there is an increasing demand for HR to be a strategic business partner. On the other, there is also a growing recognition that many basic HR functions are better devolved to line managers.

Are Filipino managers open to embracing their people management roles? Are they capable of doing so?

Ateneo CORD, in partnership with Ateneo psychology students Nana Evangelista, Bea Icao and Antonio Trinidad, sought to answer these questions.

Our survey of 140 line managers representing 20 industries showed that, on the average, 63 percent of line managers were involved with HR functions.

Managers are more involved in performance management functions and least involved in compensation and benefit functions.

Our findings also revealed that the greater **the perception of HR quality the greater the** openness of line managers to share HR functions.

Greater quality of HR was also associated with more competent line managers.

The results reveal that although the route to a true partnership between HR and the line are there, there is clearly more that needs to be done. What can organizations do to strengthen the partnership between HR and the line?

1. Ensure people management competencies.

Some organizations make the mistake of selecting and promoting managers simply **because they are good performers or deliver** results. However, good performers do not necessarily make good managers. Thus, it would help to consider people management skills in selecting managers.

Beyond selection, it is also essential that HR provide line managers with the training for them to perform HR-related tasks.

In the past two years, for example, Ateneo CORD has been running both public and customized programs called Frontline HR, which aims to develop skills of managers in basic HR functions such as selection, performance management and employee discipline.

In other organizations, people management skills are part of their Management Development Program. Another strategy to getting managers to embrace their role in people management is to make their jobs easier by **providing them job aids, software, manuals** and/or intranet portals.

2. Make line managers accountable for people management.

Organizations that are truly serious about **devolving the HR function need to make line** managers accountable for people management.

In some organizations, people management is part of managers' key result areas. Unless you go a step further by pegging available pay on people management metrics, it is also important to find champions in top management who can be models of a people oriented manager.

One way of ensuring that HR systems and policies are understood and supported by managers is by involving them in the design process.

In some organizations, HR groups do this **by engaging in a series of top-down or organization-wide consultation. Still another ap**proach is to create an HR committee composed of line managers that can be used to generate ideas, policies and programs.

3. Build credibility of HR.

However, if we want managers to partner with us, we in HR need to first build our credibility by delivering [on/to] [he/body] [w/on/to] policies will be open to misinterpretation or abuse. Users will likely circumvent systems when they do not see the logic behind them.

In addition, delivering flawlessly often entails making systems as efficient as possible. Many organizations are moving to automating HR systems and processes to ensure efficiency. Beyond delivering the basics, a key to becoming a strategic partner is the ability of HR to understand the business and its ability to align itself to the organization's direction.

4. Reorient and re-educate HR group.

Devolution can be threatening to HR practitioners because of the loss of control. On the other hand, some HR practitioners may not have the capability to evolve. Organizations need to address these sources of resistance by retooling the HR staff are reoriented and provided the training needed for them to upgrade their competencies.

Partnering for human resources will undoubtedly require much effort from both HR practitioners and line managers. Yet, there is no escaping this reality. Managers can no longer afford not to know how to properly manage their people. HR practitioners cannot take sole responsibility for people who are not under their direct supervision.

Great organizations are those who are able to effectively harness their talents and it will take a great partnership between HR and line to make this happen.

Hechanova is the executive director of the Ateneo CORD. Ateneo CORD is launching an online course entitled Effective MBM for line managers on April 13. Designed for line managers, this course can help strengthen the partnership between HR and the line. For inquiries and reservations, please contact Ateneo CORD at 426-5931 or ateneocord@admu.edu.ph.)

Good performers do not necessarily make good managers

MOVEMENTS

New PSIA board

THE PHILIPPINE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY ASsociation recently named the new members of its board. Prominent Technologies Corp. president Benj Coronel, president; Readdressing Philippines president Nora Yen-ako, vice president; Orange & Bronze Software Labs CEO Calixto Lagapac, corporate secretary; and Accenture chief information organization chief Winston Cruz, treasurer.

The PSIA board members were recently re-elected for San Edgardo Angara.

PSIA committee leaders who were also re-elected were Ian Alkuino, information and research committee; Benj Calma, PSIA ethics committee; Winston Damarillo, educational marketing committee; Omar Salonga, marketing and communications committee; Bethny Quimson, government relations committee head; and Nora Terrado, capability development committee.

BUSINESS Monday

SILAMOY™ air freshener made of dried mammals

Inventors embark on quest for a market

ID CARD swipe machine with fingerprint verification, another UP invention that the DVCRD promotes for commercialization

Cashing in on creations of the mind

By Ian Jester M. de Vera
Contributor

HAVING BEEN granted a patent for an invention is one thing. Introducing it to the public is another.

Applying for and getting a patent is just the beginning. While not all inventors do not desire to profit from their inventions, no inventor would wish to enjoy an invention alone.

But for those who want to be financially rewarded for their efforts, bringing their ideas from mind to market may be more difficult than they realize.

An ingenious inventor does not necessarily make a good entrepreneur.

Of course, there are inventors who have become successful in marketing their products alone. But not all inventors have the business acumen in commercializing their technologies. They sometimes need the help of someone who knows how to bring the product or idea to market.

That is what partnership or networking is for.

First step

"Making known the existence of the invention is the first step in the commercialization process," says Dr. Nicanor Hinanay, president of the International Federation of Inventors' Associations in Iran.

But sometimes, the inventor does not know where to go to make the product known to the first place—where to look for persons who can help the product reach the market.

The government, the private sector and the academe are where the inventor or entrepreneur would most likely want to turn to, as they have the networks or contacts they need.

Why is there a need for collaboration with other institutions?

"No idea is perfect," says Dr. Mario Nemiron S. Montaño, "It is always a case of technology push versus market pull from the perspective of commercialization. Finding a certain invention or technology

DR. MARCO Nemesio S. Montaño

At times, the market has an unmet need where science ought to attend to. And sometimes, there is already an invention but it is still undetermined."

Consumer friendly

The professor from the Marine Science Institute of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman hopes his patented, sea-weed-based pet deodorizer gel he calls Seamoy will find a partner who will help him develop the product to make it more "consumer-friendly."

"I just know the know-how," adds the professor, "but I don't know the know-who," he says.

Inventions

Thankfully, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development (OVCRD) of UP Diliman (which owns the patent of his invention) promotes research and development such as Montaño's invention and meets with representatives from the government and the private sector who may be willing to partner with him and invest in his inventions for further product development.

Other UP inventions that the OVCRD seeks to commercialize are the natural rice products developed by Dr. Ma. Patricia V. Acuzar, and the ID card swipe machine with fingerprint verification that was created by a group of UP scientists led by Prof. Joy Mitalo F. Reyes.

Market acceptability

It is easy to understand why many inventors feel that once the patent is filed, their product design is complete and their invention goes into production, they feel almost vindicated in terms of getting their product to market.

After all, it has taken a lot of time, money and effort on each part to reach that point. In reality though, the filed not that still must be undergone for the entrepreneurial inventor to market acceptability.

Sales still figures in the success of any marketable invention and should not be taken for granted.

To be successful, entrepreneurial inventors have to look at their inventions as marketable products.

It is good if the inventor has the business acumen to pursue commercialization of the product.

If not, there are governmental, academic and private institutions that the inventor could traverse and the question for entrepreneurial success always is.

(The OVCRD under UP Diliman *Vice Chancellor for Research and Development Dr. Leda G. Kuan* and *UP Diliman Chancellor Dr. Sergio S. Cao* does a wide array of innovations available for licensing. For more info please visit their website at *www.ovcrd.up.edu.ph or e-mail the author at idevera@yahoo.com.*)

GOINGS-ON

Convergys gets award

CONVERGYS WAS RECENTLY CITED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE and Industry through the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions for establishing offices in the Best Wear Cities in 2008. Convergys, a global leader in relationship management, now has 10 centers across the country and employs over 10,000 professionals.

Recently, it opened its new center in Cebu.

The new state-of-the-art contact center, encompassing two 60,000 square feet, seven-level 1,000-employees and features a one-stop customer center.

The positioning of a recruitment center as an integral part of the contact center buildings is a unique idea that ensures that Convergys is accessible and convenient for interested applicants since it is located close to the Cebu Business Park and local colleges and universities in Metro Cebu.

Now that this new facility is fully operational, the Philippines is home to 18 Convergys integrated contact centers employing over 15,000 people.

Rapu-Rapu maintains ISO ratings

SCOTTBOARD OF LS INTERNATIONAL CORP. ANNOUNCES RECENTLY that the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project (RRPP) has successfully passed the Surveillance Audits for its ISO 14001 certifications for environmental management systems (EMS) since it started these for its mining and mineral processing operations in August 2008 and February 2009, respectively.

The semi-annual audits are required to maintain ISO certifications. The latest audit was conducted by independent external auditor DEI at the end of January 2009.

The ISO 14001 certifications signify that the environmental management systems of Rapu-Rapu adhere to globally recognized standards, and said, and that the project is environmentally compliant. He added that subsequent measures to improve environmental protection continue to be put in place with the inauguration of operations last October.

The new project investors are Philex Resources Ltd. (a joint venture of LG International Corp. and Korea Resources Corp.), and the Malaysian SmeltingCorp.

Echostore launches feeding program

AS PART OF ITS TIMELESS TO ASSOCIATE SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES, ECO Echostore recently launched the Walanggay Ipinan Natin, a feeding program of ECOMOstore and Kalinga ng Kalahi Foundation to help feed malnourished children up to six years old.

The supplemental feeding program addresses the immediate nutritional and health needs of malnourished children through a daily hot meal and milk, supported by medical checkup, de-worming, and primary complex treatments.

A portion from the sales of Walanggay-related products which are sold at ECOMOstore will be given to the feeding program, while these partner-suppliers will also be donating some of their products for the feeding program. ECOMOstore has also spearheaded the formation of the Walanggay Board, bringing together a number of walanggay producers, product suppliers and retailers.

ECOMOstore is located at the ground floor of Serendra Piazza, Fort Bonifacio Global City. Check out the website at www.ecomostore.ph or call 9671888.

Seminars on realty brokerage set

THE URBAN INSTITUTE OF REAL ESTATE (IRE) CONDUCT A SEMINAR on "How To Start And Manage A Successful Realty Office" on March 28, 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the Makiling Function Room, Mike's Restaurant, 2nd Level, Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City.

Topics include how to secure prospective land, needed documents required by authority to sell, requirements to be entitled to commission, how to safeguard your commission from to start and close a transaction, sales organizational chart, sales personnel recruitment techniques and commissioning of brokers.

The lecturer series is accredited by DTI for CDP compliance and will be handled by Engr. Enrico Cruz, who has more than 40 years in real estate, engineering, condo admin, management and education.

For other details or advance registration, its fee contribute may be reached at 0915 9 091, 708 4819 / 708 4820 / 0920 9 880831 or visit@pacific.net.ph and advance ph@gmail.com.

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Filipinos hit the books

By Tina Arnao-Dantes

INVESTORS HERE AND ABROAD ARE discovering to their horror that the economic and business assumptions they once held dear are fast becoming obsolete. Credit ratings agencies are not as reliable as they once thought, the mighty car industry may be grinding to a halt and an unbridled market is too much of a good thing.

The pummeling of old ideas has consequently whetted the public's appetite for information that will help make sense of these lessons not seen since the 1930s Great Depression.

This has augured well for Powerbooks, the specialty bookstore under the giant National Bookstore group.

According to Powerbooks general manager Gabby Llamzon, sales of business books have not declined despite the economic crunch that has prompted many Filipinos to cut back on their spending.

"This is probably because now is the time to really fine-tune business skills," Llamzon told the Inquirer. "I think customers look for additional reference material.

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PABX Telephone System
• Call Transfer
• Music On Hold
• Call Privacy
• Intercom
Infinity Systems

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Find out more about the BDO Rewards Program. Visit your nearest BDO branch today!

*Minimum membership and points earning requirements apply.
** There is no need to apply or fill-out application forms to be a BDO Rewards member (except for joint Accounts). A BDO Rewards card is automatically produced upon fulfillment of membership requirements.
*** BDO Rewards cards are delivered via courier within 8 to 9 weeks from membership qualification.

BDO

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Enjoy up to 3x SM shopping points from March to May 2009!

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	New Deposits	Existing Deposits
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Double Points	Min. P50,000 / $1,500*	Min. increase of P50,000 / $1,500*

*Minimum daily average. Daily balance is GPT-FCDU.

Use your points to shop at SM Department Store, SM Supermarket, SM Hypermarket and SM affiliates.

Visit any BDO Branch to know more about BDO Rewards!

We find ways

New AdBoard officers are shifting forward

A MORE STEADFAST ADVERTISING Board of the Philippines emerged as the 2009 AdBoard officers and board of directors were sworn in after last Feb. 23 at the Colonial Hall of Forum Mega Plaza.

This year's theme is "Shift Forward". In her speech during the induction ceremonies, re-elected chair Charmaine Coullas stressed the importance of the organization's self-regulating functions as relevant to responsibility to Filipino consumers. Coullas further reiterated the role of the AdBoard throughout its 35 years of self-regulatory existence.

"We are the voice of the Philippine advertising industry. We continue to uphold self-regulation as the cornerstone of our existence. We believe that we are better together than apart," said Coullas.

Despite the myriad challenges that the AdBoard is currently facing, having an

Shown, from left: Lorenz Te Faso (Philippine Star), Charlie Martin Abello (Abello Pacific), Frank Alvarez (Advertising Associates), Jocelyn Wilson-Abad, Jay Bautista (The Mindset Company), Jose Enrique "Joe" Pedroche (Pedroche), Miguel Ramon Zenjoco Jr., Nasap Apostolon (BBDO Guerrero), Aileen Mateo (Events Pearl), keynote speaker and incoming officer Sec. Gorgy Simeon, who pledged his support and commitment to stand beside the AdBoard in this crucial endeavor. With this were from the famous

21ST ADCONGRESS COMMITTEE'S TEAM BUILDING WORKSHOP

The 21st Philippine Advertising Congress organizing committee recently conducted its first team building workshop last March 10 to 11 at the Baguio Country Club, Baguio City. The team building workshop coincides with the presentation of plans and programs, budget and updates of each committee. Shown (top photo) are (1st row from left) Maricar Pascasio (Treasurer), Anna Campos (PR and publicity), Dina Laurenaria (security), Rudy Villar (special events), and Raymond Bonilla (awards). (2nd row, from left) Bibi Marquez (advertising/sponsor), Ed Alcantara (sports), Margot Torres (general chair), Betsy Ramcharay (event master), Susan Ortascal (congress), Lorna Tabuena (operations), Andrea Kuhn (overnight). (3rd row from left) Marc Dado (editor of draft), Lucy Hidalgo (host counterpart), Mitch Del Rosario (media counterpart), Pepito Chia (PR and publicity), Pascal Flores (volunteer), Cher Bellarmin (sports), Ellen Nolan (venue leader assist), Leigh Flores (creatives), Ryan Bautista (leads and assists), and Supt. Bernardo Mora (security counterpart).

GAAP INDUCTS 2009 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS

The Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP) recently held the induction of its 2009 officers and directors Feb. 21 at the Pancake House, Makati with guest of honor Engr. Bi. Hernando, Metro Manila Press Secretary and inducting officer Charmaine V. Coullas, 2009 chair of the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard). Above are (1st Scenario) Bi Hernando, keynoter Joe Inso of Laoag Advertising; Mary Anne Arnaiz-the Undersecretary of Manila Advertising; Lolit Tan (2 seas International Trading); Hernando; keynoter Troy Bullos (Outcomm); Fred Cuenca (Cuenca & Associates); Dan Sandoval (Park Asia); Robert Sia Domingo (Global Net); Hermon de Leon (Summit Media); Jun Guzman (Homestead); Triple Alliance (Advertising Associates); and Dela Magdalo (20/80 Advertising).

P&A BAGS AMVE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Quick, tax and business advisory firm Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A) received an Award of Excellence for its outstanding book of the month contributed titled Annual Awards held annually by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP). P&A's book titled "Perseverance and Audacity: Punongbayan & Araullo, 1998-2008" (cover), was one of several projects undertaken by the firm to celebrate its 90th anniversary in Nov. '08. 2008 P&A also received an Award of Merit for this book. The Power to Forever is a joint project of the P&A Foundation Inc. and the Philippine Institute of Accountants, formerly the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA). Shown (from left) with Amit Awards committee chair Maria Victoria Espina-Varona; Food Public Information Officer Spokesman and Chief Jose Miale Marquez; P&A HR consultant and retired partner Ivan Gutierrez; P&A tax director Noel Sangalang; P&A Tax Associate; P&A manager Ma. Sol Pascual; P&A supervisor Melissa Valbuena; and PRSP president Jones Campos.

EARTH+STYLE AWARDS PIN TO TOP SALESMAN

Property developer Earth+Style Corp (ESC) awarded P1 million cash to Fernando Magsaysay of #9 Magcanlas Realty (4th from left), for top sales performance for the second consecutive year. The property consultant company sales rally, Mission #9 Magcanlas, is ESC's official, and the brands of its strategic local

sales units (from left) Cristina Tan, general manager for Earth+Style; Jacinto Sy Jr., Evelyn Inoki, chief operating officer of ESC; Vision Marketing president and chief executive officer (CEO) Raymond Abrenica; general manager for ESC; and William Chua-Lee, general manager for Earth Property.

CELEBRITY 'MOMPRENEUR' OFFERS BAZAAR

Celebrity "Mompreneur" Christine Reyes Nakao and her mommy Chingkee Reyes to their "Grand Fiesta Summer Bazaar" from April 29 to 30, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the World Trade Center. Part of the proceeds of the entrance

ticket sales will go to the activities of Liberty Bells, SCWM Midtown Banyan medical program, and the Shepherd of the Valley orphanage.

Below with the members by OIP, Tipo Medina, Pop Kitty Fund, Co-Reyes Jr., Philippines Redcross Fiesta Grace, Joy Lim, Chicken Sea, Elaine Bayona, Penny Salonga, Dr. Jessica Sy, Dr. Gary Sy, Margaret Cory Quirino, Andy Gay Ong, Lilia Tolentino, Chua, Lucy Angeles. Also available were in all the booths, wreaths and welcome were improve offered, as well as luxury celebrity exhibitors!

KIDLAT HONORS 5 GOLDS AND 3 AWARDEES

Out of 500 ads entered across 21 different categories in this year's Kidlat Awards, only 5 managed to score gold. Not a bad number, considering that this year's jury was probably the competition's toughest, with the likes of international design guru Eddie Boy Boncan, TBWA's Creative at Large for Asia Pacific, John Wenfield, and The creative genius, Jurassic's Thaikeong of JWT United.

The 5 entries chosen to represent the best of this year's crop of Philippine ads were TBWA's "Wow" TV commercial and "Recycle" bag, McCann WorldGroup's "I am Mine" integrated campaign, DMB Jaymeldy's "Awake" radio ad, and Bates 141's "Bond Cancer" mini.

Rounding out the jury were creative heads from local agencies, including Simon Welsh and David Guerrero from BBDO Guerrero, Raul Castro from McCann WorldGroup, Ginseng Esenaga from Campaigns, Melvin Mangahas from TBWA\Santiago Mangada Puno, Marlen Jayme from DMB\Jaymeldy, Raoul Flores from Leo Burnett, Don Davila from Publicis Jimenez/Basic, Raoul Hontiveros from Ace Saatchi & Saatchi and Steve Clay from Lowe.

TBWA\SMP was the only agency to pick up 3 golds during the night, with "Wow" and "Recycle" bag chosen by Boncanister for being the most memorable piece in the entire competition. The bag, which had the iconic green recycle sign as a handle, was designed for TBWA Worldwide's Carbon Neutral initiative. Their other win, "Wow", illustrated the country's reputation woes by showing a full-fledged tourist exhibit onto the train station after a locomotive had passed. The ad was made on behalf of the UP Population Institute.

McCann WorldGroup won gold for their simple yet clever use of the late senator Ninoy Aquino's iconic glasses. The memorable "I Am Mine" campaign, which urged the youth to enable more of the values than the national hero stood for, included TV commercials, billboards and flyers. Unlike other integrated entries, McCann had presented the materials using a short video which helped the judges fully appreciate its scope and power.

Dela Jaymeldy's radio spot for Pro-Life Philippines entitled

Judges convene in sunny Boracay for the 2009 Kidlat Awards.

"Awake" moved pro-choice advocate John Mico Reid to vote it for a gold award. This act encouraged women to view the prospect of motherhood in a different light.

Bates 141's gold-winning work was an insert in the publication Women Today Asia. No bigger than a calling card, the piece was emblazoned with the words "Breast Cancer" and it advocated early detection as the best deterrent against the disease.

In the Kidlat Young Creatives competition, the team of Kuke Alvendia and Pasco David from Dentsudraft took home top honors. The two will represent the country in the Young Lions competition at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival in June. The Philippine Daily Inquirer, official festival representation to the event, assured their win is complete among other young creatives from around the world in the Film category.

Finishing second were Rachel Tecklo and Leah Mabalingcogon from BBDO Guerrero. They are currently in Pattaya, Thailand, competing in the Young Lotus competition at the Adfest.

The Creative Guild also inducted 3 Hall of Famers at the awards night. Joel Limchoc, co-ECD of BBDO Guerrero was recognized first for 15 years in the industry and several international awards and citations from Cannes Lions, D&AD, and the One Show, among others. Limchoc becomes the youngest member of the prestigious group. He acknowledged the many mentors over the years, and gave special mention to his wife Kat, who is expecting their baby girl, whom they will name Zoe.

Marlen Dayo also received the next inductee, credited with having created some of the country's most memorable campaigns to date for clients like J&J, PLDT, SMART, and PBB. She also set records with an unprecedented 7 Act of the Year wins locally and numerous international awards from Cannes Lions, One Show and Adfest. She was also a 2-time president of the Creative Guild. She is Chairperson and Chief Creative Officer of DMB Jaymeldy.

Also recognized was Jay Jay Cuenca who came to the awards night to highlight two to some tools like the discovery of Cruz-Jaymeldy talent. The former Chairman and CEO of JWT was the first Filipino appointed GM to the agency back in 1975. He was also the first Filipino to hold a regional role in the network as International Vice President. Afterwards 5 decades of helping shape the industry, Cuenca was bestowed the Lifetime Achievement Award, joining the likes of Gil Reyes, Emily Abrera and Minang Gridanez.

The Creative Guild celebrated its 20th year with the 2009 Kidlat. The Guild Officers who hosted the awards show include president David Guerrero, competition directors, Dino Guanzon (DBM), Jake Tesoro (TBWA) and Eugene Gonzalez (DMB Jaymeldy), director of communications, Diane Feria (JWT), Director for Industry, Leigh Reyes (TWP), director for the Young Creatives, Trinci Domingo (Publicis Jimenez/Basic), board secretary and treasurer, Rat Limchoc (PCBA) and info representative, Vanne Tenorio.

SUPPORTED BY

INQUIRER

Filipinos hit ...

First page B2-1

al to figure out what to do during tough times and I think they find it in business reference books, whether managerial, corporate or entrepreneurial."

At the top of the list of best-selling business books is Robert Kiyosaki's "Increase your Financial IQ."

In this latest addition to the Rich Dad, Poor Dad series, Kiyosaki lays out his five key principles of financial intelligence guaranteed to increase net worth.

- How to increase your money—how to assess what you're really worth now, what your prospects are, and how to start mapping out your financial future.
- How to protect your money...for better or for worse, times are a-wap of late.
- How to budget your money—everybody wants to live large, but you have to learn how to live within your budget.
- How to leverage your money—as you build your financial IQ, knowledge is your power money or work for you; it is crucial step.
- How to improve your financial information... Kiyosaki shows you how to accelerate your wealth as you learn more.

Now on the list is Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers."

Here, he again talks about the patterns behind success.

Gladwell says, for instance, that Bill Gates, the Beatles and Mozart have one thing in common. Along with talent and ambition, each enjoyed an unusual opportunity to obsessively cultivate a skill that allowed them to rise above their peers.

Then there's "Snowball" by Alice Schroeder, a former managing director at Morgan Stanley who was chosen by financial expert Warren Buffet to be his biographer.

Along with managerial advice from the "Oracle of Omaha," the book comes with gossipy tidbits (the married Buffett's very public relationship with Washington Post editor Katherine Graham), thus making the book an easy read despite its many pages.

Still on the best-seller list is the "Art of War" by Sun Tzu.

Sun Tzu wrote the book on military strategy based on Chinese warfare and ordinary thought 2,500 years ago, and yet the principles still ring true in politics, business and everyday life.

There are many versions to choose from such as one co-written and foreword by James Clavell.

With companies scrambling to find new materials in these hard times, it is no surprise that the "Wise Ocean Strategy" by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne rocked up on the list of best-selling business books.

The book is the result of a decade-long study of 150 strategic moves in 30 industries made over 100 years, from 1880-2000.

Essentially the authors argue that the companies that made the most profit are those who were able to move out of the "red ocean" of a market with too many competitors and dive into a "blue ocean" with no competitors.

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BUSINESS Monday

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By Rika Peralta
Contributor

IF YOU CAN'T BUILD IT, WHY NOT rent out it? A power plant, that is.

No new power plants are being constructed in the Philippines, what with the global financial downturn affecting many confidence of US and European investors in the power sector.

But with demand for electricity increasing every year, there is a need to fill in the gap, especially in the Visayas where there is an impending power shortage.

A recurring alternative is reducing the demand for electricity by using energy more efficiently.

Replacing inefficient incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) is one way to do just that.

Under a $16-million loan recently approved by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), $10 million will be set aside for the National Residential Lighting Program to buy 13 million CFLs to be given away throughout the country in exchange for incandescent bulbs.

The ADB augments that will be taken off the load is approximately 3 percent of the Philippines' total generation capacity and about two thirds of the 525 MW that would have been generated by the controversial Subic Phalcon Power Plant.

This energy efficiency project will drive investments of some $400 million in new power plants, save about $300 million annually in fuel costs, and avoid 500,000 tons of CO2 emissions annually. Some re-cleared power sources.

With lower greenhouse gas emissions, it will also create carbon credits for the country under the Clean Development Mechanism.

Distribution will start in the middle of this year, where 13 million CFLs will be given away all over the country through the major utility firms in Cebu City (Visayan Electric Co.), Cagayan de Oro City (Cagayan Electric Power and Light Co.) and Davao City (Davao Light and Power Co.) as part of their corporate social responsibility programs.

In the rural areas, approximately 100 electric cooperatives all over the country will be tapped.

Each utility is responsible for distributing the CFLs to their subscribers.

On a first come, first serve basis, residential customers will bring in two working incandescent bulbs in exchange for two CFLs of single wattage (i.e. 13, 14, or 15 watt, equally equivalent to 60-75 watt incandescent lamps).

The bulbs will be tested and incinerated to determine the carbon credits. They will be crushed later on to ensure that they will no longer be sold, to free malls that government's plan to phase out incandescent bulbs by 2014.

An average incandescent bulb's life is only about 800 hours, and the two CFLs that will replace them under the project have a life of 10,000 hours or 7.30 years for a single bulb at three hours/day of average use.

The two bulbs one year a household P800 in electricity cost per year.

"What we are trying to do in the Philippines is a range of energy efficiency initiatives that are already well-proven in the world," says Sohail Hasnie, ADB senior energy specialist.

"One million CFLs at a cost of about $1.3 million have the same impact as a $50 million, 50 MW power station without operational cost and CO2 emissions. The Philippines can become the pioneer for energy efficiency initiatives to be scaled in the region," Hasnie added.

The project will also have a component to retrofit government office buildings and public lighting systems with efficient lighting.

Older-style fluorescent lamps, incandescent bulbs, and inefficient magnetic ballasts will be replaced by energy-efficient alternatives.

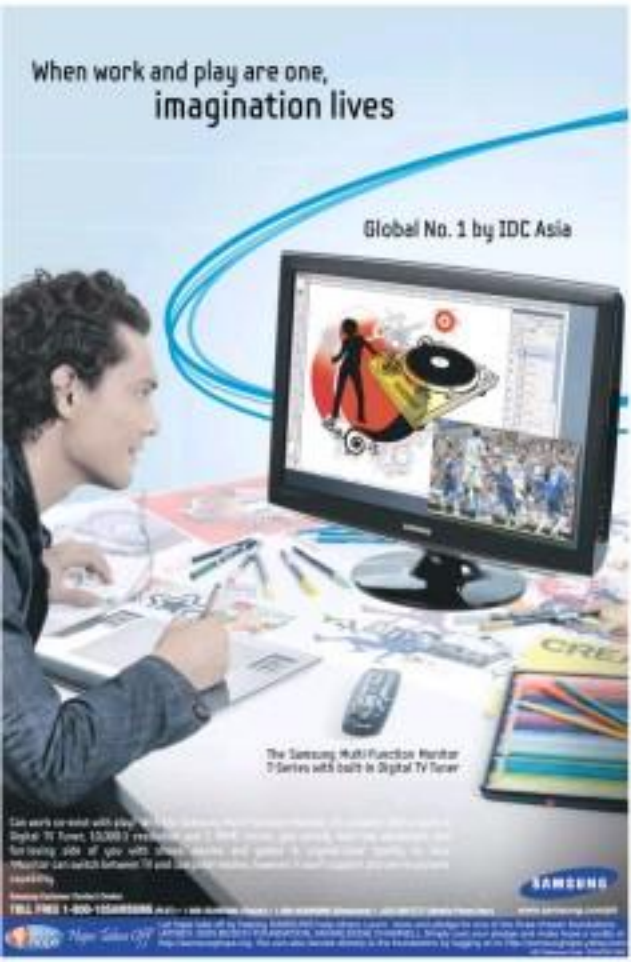
About 40 selected government offices have been identified for the retrofit, and save about 7,000 megawatt-hours annually, equivalent to about $1.7 million savings and avoid 5,000 tons of greenhouse emissions per year.

An energy service company to be called ESCO will also be established to provide financial and technical support to consumers planning to reduce energy consumption. ESCO will act as a one-stop shop for energy efficiency for public enterprises like hospitals, schools and government buildings and also private sector like industrial, hotels and malls.

ADB is the lead financing agency in the Philippine power sector.

(The author is a national officer of the ADB.)

TWO ENERGY EFFICIENT bulbs can save a household P800 a year in electricity cost.



Aboitiz Power joins Earth Hour campaign

By Amy R. Remo

ABOITIZ POWER CORP. WILL join the millions of Filipinos who will switch off their lights for 60 minutes in support of Earth Hour 2009.

In a statement, AP said its offices and facilities will turn off their lights on Saturday's Earth Hour, 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., while its subsidiaries are also being encouraged to take part in the symbolic activity.

Earth Hour, a global millions-proved power blackout, is meant to remind people worldwide of the need to act for climate change. This is an initiative of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Department of Energy, Green team Network and SWITCH movement.

Over a hundred corporations, schools, public and private organizations have pledged their support for the program and the roster of supporters grows by the hour, according to WWF.

"We will make the necessary sacrifices if that will help provide a cleaner earth and sufficient resources to maintain our power business in the generations to come," said AP president and chief executive officer Antonio Aboitiz.

Supporting Earth Hour is part of AP's efforts to promote environmental stewardship in line with its sustainability goals.

Manila Power is the single largest private sector provider of renewable energy in the Philippines. It carries the Chairman's brand in its portfolio through its hydroelectric generating company. It plans to add geothermal power to its energy mix.

This year, Earth Hour 2009 hopes to inspire at least 10 million Filipinos to unite and act for the environment.

In 2008, the Earth Hour generated savings of 56 megawatt-hours of electric power in Latrobe and 10 MWH in Melbourne, equivalent to the output of a small coal-fired power plant.

According to the Department of Energy, an estimated one million Filipinos were involved in the one-hour blackout, while over 400 establishments participated by turning off signs and non-essential lights.

Bonifacio Boulevard became the focal point of the celebration in Manila as it cuts across the cities of Manila, Pasay and Makati. Quezon City, Makati and Mandaluyong also joined in the activity.

"Will Earth Hour alone stop climate change? No, but it is a statement that we will not go down without a fight," said WWF-Int. chief and chief executive Lory Tan.

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

"LANDSCAPE: Panorama, Zamboanga, 1961"

Zamboanga as Onglepho's muse

JAMES Onglepho (seated) paints on the spot in Pasonanca, Zamboanga, 1959.

In his 28th solo exhibit, the Chinese-Filipino master shows nostalgic images of his childhood home

By Benjamin C. Wee
Contributor

ACROSS MY BREAKFAST table one early January morning was James Onglepho, brimming over with news of his 28th one-man exhibit, March 28-April 8, in Asia Art Gallery at the SM Mall of Asia.

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Zamboanga as Onglepho's muse

From page 11

James was my mentor at the erstwhile Zamboanga Chinese High School in the back in those balmy days of the '60s in Zamboanga City. Learning that he was going to turn the art spotlight on Zamboanga City, I texted, "Why not make it a truly Zamboanga event?"

I offered to invite Zamboanga City Mayor Celso L. Lobregat, as well as known personages with Zamboanga roots, such as Anita Rosa Woo Diu Peng, Araceli Pere, Alberto V. Siapoco and Melina C. Bocjalico, to be guests of honor for the ribbon-cutting.

James packed up over seven years and post-box second-class and I further suggested "Recuerdos de Zamboanga" (Memories of Zamboanga) as an appropriate title. Reminiscing and becoming a little emotional from nostalgia, he said the name for the exhibit was apt.

"I have been in the Philippines for 70 years, 40 of those in Manila and 30 in Zamboanga, which I consider my second hometown," he revealed. "I have strong emotional ties to Zamboanga and the city was where I began to develop my particular style, a journey that spanned the decades from 1958 to 1980," he added.

Filipino painter

For his "Recuerdos" exhibit, James has chosen a few oil paintings and pen-and-ink drawings of Zamboanga as he knew the city. And he knew many nooks and crannies of Zamboanga City well...since he had done on-the-spot painting in Pasonanca (where he spent a lot of time), San Roque, Sta. Catalina, Ayala, Rio Hondo and Sunset.

He was adventurous, too, going to a lot of islands and towns off Zamboanga City—Aliaga, Talusan, Mercedes, Ipil, Bolinsilan, even Ash Sella, and as far as Cotabato and Davao.

For that matter, it would pay to mention that he has just been in profile and active in Luzon as well, going to such areas as Sual, Cavite, Tagaytay, Baguio, Puerto Azul, Mismallow and Antipolo in search of inspiration for his paintings.

"I consider myself a Filipino painter influenced by Chinese culture," James says.

I know his warm Chinese essays, short stories and art critiques during the '60s, which were published in a dozen newspapers of Taiwan, R.O.C.

In 1989, James visited for the first time Huang Shan (Yellow Mountain) in China. A mountain with sure form and composition and perceived as a monumental giant from every angle, it influenced James' style from then on, which is why a good number of his paintings were landscapes.

Romance with lotus

But there is something about James Onglepho's paintings that grabs your sight away. Look at his collection and you will see one dominant object—the lotus. I couldn't help but ask him about it. And I found out more about the Filipino-Chinese relationship that characterized his paintings.

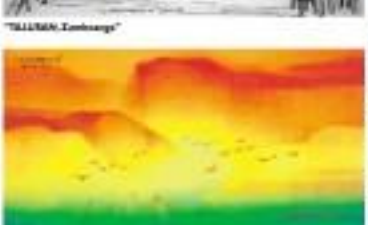
"It all began when I was still in Zamboanga, now a pond in Pleasure Island was my haunt in 1993," Onglepho recalled.

He said he had seen and always admired lotus flowers for their unique color and form, prompting him to try and capture them on canvas and paper. He said his romance with the lotus always took place during the Philippine summer since in Macau, from February to March there.

"The lotus is also a special subject of Chinese paintings, but I use Western materials and techniques to paint, which is why my lotus paintings are not Chinese paintings," Onglepho explained.

Which is not to say he didn't paint the lotus in the Chinese setting. He did, going to Hang Zhou, China, and Taiwan to paint the flowers in these settings during July to August, the Chinese summer and the lotus season.

"TALUBAN, Zamboanga"


"SINAMISCAPE 2009.01"

"LANDSCAPE Panorama, Zamboanga, '09.2"

Unique way

"I felt happiness and fulfillment in the lotus flowers," James revealed. "It grows in an untidy environment but it remains very clean, pristine and never seems to get dirty."

The lotus is known to symbolize mankind since mankind can survive and flourish even in unpleasant circumstances.

"It has a unique way of changing form and color from the bud form to the new blossom until it attains its full glory," James said. "Every time I paint the lotus, I celebrate its beauty and elegance."

Onglepho has always been a full-time painter. In 1996, he established Ann Art Gallery, which serves as his main outlet and the organizer of his annual exhibits.

As a professional painter who has worked to refine, heighten and maintain a high quality and standard for his paintings, Onglepho remains thankful for his talent, which he says is God-given.

"Recuerdos de Zamboanga" will open March 28, 6 p.m., at Ann Art Gallery, Unit 1113, Entertainment Mall, SM Mall of Asia, Pasay City. Call 832-9030/3062.

VISUAL ARTS

UE student-artists exhibit

The University of the East College of Fine Arts-Advertising Arts and Painting majors graduating classes hold the exhibit "Artistic," until March 31 at the SM Mall of Asia Pavilion. Visit the UE CFA, 6/F Tan Yan Kee Academic Building, UE Caloocan. Call 361-0457, 731-0098 loc 105 and 524-2042 loc 105. Visit www.ue.edu.ph/caloocan.

Isidro, Delacruz et al. at Crucible

Southern Artists Atelier will hold a group exhibit March 24-April 5 in Crucible Gallery, 6/F 3BGeneral Luna cor. Gen. Malvar, Intramuros. Featuring Ephraim Gamaro, Raul Isidro, Edgar Doctor, Fil Delacruz, Al Perez and Rudolf Sandalo. Call 5266861.

Pacquing at Magnet

Bernardo Pacquing's "Untitled (Mothercoal)" is running at Magnet (The Columbian Tower, Ayala Avenue cor. Rada, Makati; call 8900101) through April 11. Done almost entirely in black and white, the oil paintings expressed a "deeply intuitively coherent show that uses dualism to discern intuitions."

"PAINTING Semblance"

Petyjohns at Alliance

Jos and Tessy Petyjohn's pottery exhibit, "Footprints," runs in Alliance Française de Manille (268 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati) until April 10. Call 8863441 or 8957585, e-mail cultural@alliance.ph or cultural@alliance.ph.

Smith at Crucible

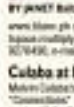
Mark Creasing Joel Smith exhibited his charlie works in Crucible Gallery (4/F, Bldg. A, 3BGeneral Blvd.Intramuros) until yesterday.

Group exhibit at Silahis

"Pamasang Sining" runs March 21-April 5 in Silahis Arts Salon, 3/F Silahis Center, 1144 East Lane St., Intramuros, Manila. It features artists Mae de Jesus, Jessica Alba, Fernando Buitizon, Kidlat Bonta, Salvador Bunsoro, Marco Bunsoro, Fernando Bonsalan, Jose Duran, Nemesio Garcia, Christopher Gatmaitan, Barry Jorge, Ryan Magon, Raffy Napay, Jayvee Pita, Jaimarie Ramos, Ralph Sandalo and Rene Tan. Call 5273113.

Balbarona at Blanc

Jaime Balbarona's art is held at "visual nerve Jaime." "The Cryo 3 Blending 113 Is Second Round," opens tonight at Blanc Gallery, 2/F Green Tree, 113 "B" St. Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati. Visit www.blanc.ph or www.blancart-japan.multiply.com, call 7128003, 8830-8274/8436, e-mail info@blanc.ph.


BY JANET Balbarona

Culaba at Blanc

Melvin Culaba's "Connections" runs until April 9 in the Diane component, 3rd Main Blvd., Mandaluyong. Call 7128003 or 8826-9218/8436, e-mail to-be@blanc.ph or visit www.blancartspace.multiply.com.

"PEACE Yima... ...to Bagong Tipan"

Gfeller and Palomo at Boston

"We, Silent World" by Sandra Mae Gfeller and "Resonance" by Anthony Palomo are featured in Boston Gallery (72 Boston St., Greenhills East, Mandaluyong) until April 15. Gfeller presents paintings of ballet dancers while Palomo tackles the underwater world. Call 7226305.

Group exhibit at White Box

Mark Arbela, Dong Sering and Mon Tacusalan reload the group exhibit "Exodus," at White Box Gallery, Cubao Expo, Cubao, Quezon City. It runs until April 1. Call 437-3839 or e-mail whitebox_studio@yahoo.com.

Student art

The Master's Academy Homeschool presents works by kinder to high-school students in "Scripted Strokes," which runs until March 28 at The Jewellery (2/F, Greenhills, San Juan).

New at Art Informal

Lenny Beers' "Passion Aggressive" runs until April 15 in Art Informal, 221 Connecticut St., Greenhills East, Mandaluyong. Call 591-9/5925198.

Gutierrez at Ricco Renzo

"Ethereal Vision" by Jonalita Lito Gutierrez runs until April 8 at Ricco Renzo Italian and Cafe, G/F, LTG Design Plaza, 2316 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. Call 8862545 or visit riccorenzo.com.

Choice Expression introduces new young artists

CHOICE EXPRESSION GALLERY is holding "Wine: Divine Delight in One Common Passion" until March 28.

The show features the works of Arnel Bellanero, Emeliano de Guzman Jr., Cesar Delgado, Ernest Hidalgo, Patrick Fernandez, Joseline Ines-Reyes, Alfaudel Iqbal Mohammad, Joel Solano and Carla Tolosa.

"This is quite a grand and big exhibit since it's not everyday that you see painters and a sculptor in one show," said gallery owner Benj Mercado.

Bellanero, 33, a native of Iloilo City, studied at Philippine Women's University "campus," he said, is a semi-final salon on the Diwa lifestyle, while "Overlooking" is a cityscape of Makati, where he stays.

"SUNDO," by Arnel Bellanero

Dr. Guzman is studying at Pangasinan State University. "Bagdan Bagdang Pangarap ng mga Batang Nagsipagsaya" and "Bagdan Magdang Pangarap ng mga Batang Lakbay Lansangan" are depictions of his young, idealistic aspirations.

Delgado, a Fine Arts graduate of Technological University of the Philippines (TUP) and a native of Oriental Mindoro, shows his sentimental reminiscences in "Tao at Kapaligiran Magkaugnay."

Hidalgato is a sculptor and a Mass Communications graduate of Saint Louis University. A scuba diving enthusiast, his sculptures are stimulated by marine symbols.

Fernandez, 26, hails from Dagupan and does abstract expressionist works of "metrophysical and social issues."

His "Elemental Identity" consists of 11 pieces of different canvases cubed-canvases, to concrete social bonds.

Ines-Reyes, another TUP graduate, is represented by "The Economic," which is about religion, and "For Love to Believe," which is about personal choice.

Mohammad paints images that combine the ethnic, the religious and the secular.

Fresh from his first solo exhibit, at 41 Circles Esperanza, Solano now spends presents his colorful and lively satirical paintings.

Tolosa hails from Columbia City and is a fill Forestry graduate of UP Los Baños.

Choice Expression is at G/F, Delta Consolacion Bldg., 322 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Call 8960518. Visit www.choiceexpressions.com.

Rare Malang paintings and drawings on show

"BARUNG BARONG"

GALERIE JOAQUIN PRESENTS "Malang: Rare Paintings and Drawings," a collection of nearly 40 works on paper and on canvas showcasing two facets of the 81 year-old artist's career.

The show encompasses two of his best-known themes in native motifs such as oil pastel, oil paint, gouache and watercolor: the rigidity of his buildings balanced by soft skins; and the round-faced eyes-tied Cubist female renders. The landscapes date from the early 1970s to the early '90s, many of them watercolor pieces from 1978, while the women are rendered mainly in oil-based media from the late '90s, ranging from an early Mother and Child to more or another early seven painted 25 years later. Malang's dedication to his craft is evident in the evolution of his drawings; his voice and coloring remain always for ours.

The exhibit opens March 28, 7 p.m., and runs until April 8 at Galerie Joaquin, 5/F 2 Gereria St., cor. Montessori Lane, Addition Hills, San Juan. Visit www.galeriejoaquin.com or call 723-9416 or 7220203.

"CAMBIZA"

Emerging artists at Raphael

GALERIE RAPHAEL WILL UNveil "E.F.A." (Emerging Young Artists) on March 26.

featured are the playful works of Amador Barquilla, Ajo Pingol, Dollalas, Dolloza, Ten Reyes, Aldrin, Ramones Arabia and Tagaytay.

Also featured is Jovan Bonito (Trash Monkey"). Although hardly a new name in the art scene, Bonito is only 26, but ... has made his mark in ... national international art ... in Southeast Asia.

The exhibit runs until April 13. Galerie Raphael is at Unit 2C-06, 2/L, The Fort, Bonifacio Mall, Fort Bonifacio Global City. For inquiries, call 856-3204 or visit www.galerieraphael.com.

"SEMIAHOE," by Ajo Pingol

"SMOKEDFish," by Bonito

Bermido's political satire, Cordero-Fernando's oddball art, Magno's transformative colors

By Lito B. Zulueta

Bermido's provocative art

YOUNG ARTIST ART BERMIDO (1980-2005) chronicles social repression in "Case Sana" (opening March 24 at Sigwada Gallery, 1921 Decapitado St., San Gran, Manila, near the corner of Tayuman Street, Tel. 7410973 or 0917-8070400), but to the server of socio-political commentary. The first half of the short life of this native-to-the-80s agonized by President Macapagal-Arroyo videos that proclaimed herself early this year with drug case; the second half is a smoothing of the Tagalog "man," or revolution, apparently referring to the people's obliteration of corruption to high places. Bermido heightens the feeling of disgust by painting well-known political figures flashing a smile to represent the latest bout of politicians, and pitting them against a passage from the World Bank report on influence bidding practices by public works contractors: "Corrupted to the core, and evidently by a 'Cartel' of kickback takers with support from the highest levels of the Philippine government."

In his previous works, Bermido, who finished Fine Arts, major in Painting, at University of Santo Tomas, does latest took up Love, drew subrealistic black figures on a white background, striking Surrealism-like proportions of characters and types. His abstraction could be called an attempt at character typologies, and his new shots largely hold true on the psychological strength of his art but transposed to the realm of politics. The flat abstract surface remains, a mix of silver and monochrome, the better to highlight the politician's face. The result is satirical art that pushes and provokes.

Cordero-Fernando's watercolors

In the three-woman exhibit at La Salette in Bonifacio Global City, Hilda Cordero-Fernando's watercolors are the perfect complement to the bamboo-and-paper lamps by Wendy Regal, tiki and cloth sculptures by Abner Quinio. All of the works have the idiosyncratic, playful references identified of the three artists by their friends and admirers.

Architect-turned-artist Regalado's art lamps take the form of animals, such as "Night Bird Oil," "Hot Fish," "Hungry Pig," and "Banana Tree with Heart." Eight soft sculpture interpretations also of animals, such as "Galunggong," "Kambing sa Bundo" and "Barking Rooster" represent the socially-oriented art of Quinio.

Perhaps because she is a feminist and personal recognit., Cordero-Fernando rarely evokes character and representation through soft lines and strategic distortion. Her subjects are nothing less than Filipino popular culture as reflected in mythical creatures, religious subjects. Fancy-invented saints and words. Cordero-Fernando's art is definitely keyed up in character types and personality modes. Here is the charming art of the oddball and the eccentric.

CORDERO-FERNANDO'S squarelike show her energetic color—characterization.

Magno's fusions

Carlo Magno seems to have made academics out of avoiding being pinned down to one style. He has run the gamut of styles—from realism to impressionism, from figurative romanticism to conceptual abstractionism. The shift to the latter has been particularly remarkable and has won for him a new set of collectors while not entirely abandoning his old patrons. Cordero-Fernando has positively forsaken representation, his artistic impulsiveness. It is only a matter of time for him to meld his old and new styles together.

The result is "Transformations 2" (at the IBB Megatrade Art Center until March 31, Tel. 4042607). The works range from the conventionally abstract to semi-abstract. There's figurative representation such as "Flower Child" and "Whole Note," the titles making it obvious what the figures are. In the latter, the flowers are barely shown at the hands of the girl holding them; they seem to replicate them in her hands (like the gardens in tissue and earth colors. The same colors in monochromatic style dominate the latter painting, where figures are a violin and Magno's trademark orb.

The fact that the figures are basically abstracted should indicate that Magno is still concerned by technique, and the use of the modern (in fact are symbolically non-figurative, particularly the engaging "Forest Trails" series and other nature paradoxes. The title should indicate that the one constant in Magno's ever-changing mood is color, from the early role that crept in that always to mimic the realistic of "Corrida" to the blustery blues of "Salt Winds." The color interpretations oftentimes become the styles and genre subjects have something to develop and now that's what "Transformations" is all about.

"FOREST Trails" I, by Carlo Magno

"WHOLE Notes," by Magno

CORDERO-FERNANDO'S squarelike show her energetic color—characterization.

Investing Right in Residential Real Estate

With uncertain times ahead, experts continue to believe that when done intelligently, investments still provide a credible safeguard for liquid resources. Tangible assets like real estate properties are smart and solid investments that appreciate over time. But while many are already jumping into the real estate bandwagon, those who plan to purchase property – whether to live in or as investment – must take a few things in consideration before making that crucial decision.

Go for value. The price tag on a home can be daunting, so cost is naturally a primary concern. But investment experts warn against hastily-made decision based solely on the property's low selling price which may end up costing buyers later on. Experts recommend prioritizing the value of the property and getting fully acquainted with the package behind the price. Aside from design and quality, the developer's capability to deliver the project completely is one of the most important factors to consider when choosing which property to invest in.

Location, location, location. A great location offers convenience, mobility, and a property value that increases over time – making it one of the key characteristics of a rewarding real estate investment. Choose a property strategically located within areas where you, or your family spend most of the day's activities in. For individuals, investing in residential properties within proximity to central business districts conveniently saves time transitioning from one activity to another.

Quality over quantity. While commuting is a sizable investment the residential real estate, going with the right developer is the key. Choose one that is reputable, experienced, and successful – a developer that you will have no trouble trusting. Value quality over quantity by choosing based on the recognition for excellence and superiority of its projects.

Experienced investors recommend Rockwell Land as a premier developer that has a keen understanding of the lifestyle you would enjoy living. Its latest development, The Grove by Rockwell is expected to introduce the essence of Rockwell living in a new location. Conveniently located along the C-5 corridor of properties near Ortigas Avenue, the exclusively residential property is designed to contain a 75-25 ratio of landscape to building space, meticulously meant planned to include a retail cluster, jogging and biking trails, wellness center, and an extensive amenities enclave right within its gates.

With 90% already sold for the first two towers that launched in November 2006, The Grove by Rockwell continues to experience success in unit sales despite the current economic downturn. "The Grove by Rockwell is a wise investment mainly because Rockwell's credibility has withstood the test of time, overcoming tough economic conditions during the 1997 Asian financial crisis," shares Vicent Tranglico, Head of Marketing. She then adds, "The property not only offers value for your money in terms of the lifestyle included in the development, but also a more promising return on investment for the long-term."

As a new Rockwell class, so does the opportunity to invest in the Rockwell brand. Undoubtedly, Rockwell will continue to deliver the lifestyle and comfortable balance of work and play to those who truly deserve it. Visit The Grove by Rockwell's model unit located at Power Plant Mall or call 793-0088 today. You may also log on to www.x-rockwell.com to get a glimpse of the property's exciting features.

Among the many headlines

of meltdowns and uncertainties,

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This is urban planning to turn a city green. Think of resort-inspired living complete with a waterfall, groves of trees, koi ponds, zen gardens, private lounge pools, miles of jogging paths, bike trails and more inspiring features. It's having a sure thing that's quite refreshing. From local build Rockwell. Call 793-0088 or go to www.x-rockwell.com. Visit our model unit at the Power Plant Mall.

Rockwell, Ortigas.

LIFESTYLE Arts&Books

Collecting real, raw, 'unrarified' art

NKRA
Isiid_ora
19th century, from the Fley Quiros collection

By Aya B. Honrado
Contributor

IN HIS HOME IN QUEZON City, writer, director, award-winning playwright, and passionate printmaker-art collector and dealer Fley Quiros lives alone.

But he's never quite alone. The shelves and tables are docked with a phalanx of figures, carvings—including a stunning, wild-haired Virgin Mary—and the ubiquitous star of the show, his Isiid or carved wooden primary gods, in a variety of incarnations.

Doesn't he worry that, with all these ancient objects, he may also be bringing home a spirit or two?

"Very long," Quiros says. "It doesn't bother me. I like to think we communicate in an animistic way and they know they've found a home. On the other hand, I always have my St. Benedict medal. Anong Papa, diamor-banned [semi-translation, 'if the oldest knows that you love it, it will love you back.']

It's a legitimate question, as the Isiid is, after all, truly of the spirit world. In fact, Quiros explains, as he breathes into a riveting narrative of Isiid 101, for the Bigyan, the Isiid and the process of its creation are part of math in their cool tradition.

He tells the lovely legend of an epic hero, Hamabliad, who came upon a naree tree making a tremendous noise in the middle of the forest.

"The villagers asked the tree, 'What do you want in lie, a bagabi [a prestige item]? A head? A human?' The tree answered, making noise. Finally they asked, 'Do you want to be a Isiid?' And then the tree was quiet. So they felled the tree, and made a Isiid."

Isiid also refers to figures used for death, healing, even sorcery and sex rituals, Quiros says. A souvenir of the earlier, like the bodies of a dead chicken, man and/or the figure, along with the considerable value of sacrificial blood that has been passed over it for generations. There are even Isiid with their faces in their hands, like Rodin's "Thinker."

"You have to remember that these animals were placed with wine as they chanted for prolonged periods," Quiros says. "So that's a very accurate pose."

Avid scholar

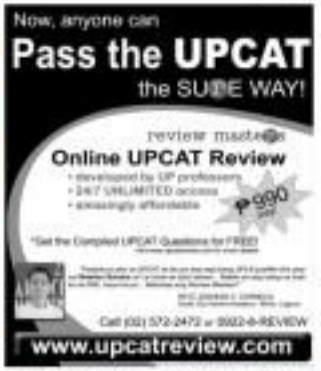
The oldest Isiid are carved, Quiros reckons, when after certain powers they have displayed or feats they have performed, much like the miracles associated with saints.

Thus, these artworks come with hard-earning scores, salads are a big part of what draws this artful scholar.

"My other hobby is buying the books and papers and old material that accompany them, the stories...that's what makes it more than an object."

Quiros introduces us to Isiid of Ifugao title in Ifugao, a 17th-century Isiid accompanying a plant of home on his shelf, which allegedly survived

HOMBAH Isiid, circa 1918



GARFIELD

JL LIPAN

FUSSO BARDY

DICK TRACY

LOVEHONTS

BY ELIZABETH CHOMKO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALUSI

BABY BUZZ

BY JERRY SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBSY

BY LIRA GARCELLANO

TULDOK

BY MARA COLL

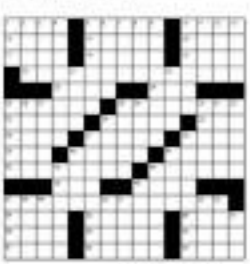
KIKO MACHINE

BY MARK ASEREN

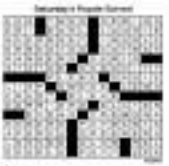
SEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



Saturday's Puzzle Solved



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		5			4	1		2
				5			3	
2			9	8	1			7
		4			5	7		3
	5	1				2	9	
9		8	2			4		
7			4	6	3			1
	4			2				
5		9	8			6		

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Visit and snap.com at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

8	4	6	7	2	9	1	5	3
9	2	5	7	1	3	8	6	4
3	1	7	8	4	5	2	9	6
6	9	1	5	7	2	4	3	8
4	5	7	3	8	6	9	2	1
2	8	3	9	1	4	7	6	5
5	3	4	2	6	1	5	7	8
1	6	5	3	9	7	8	4	2
7	2	8	4	5	8	3	1	9

Rachelle Gerodias, UST Singers team up in 'Angelic Voices'

By Pablo Tariman
Contributor

LIE ORIGIN PLAZA, IN CELEBRATION of its fifth anniversary, will hold "A Night of Angelic Voices," featuring the country's premier soprano Rachelle Gerodias and premier choral group University of Santo Tomas (UST) Singers, on March 26, 6:30 p.m., at the LIE Pavilion, 2/F, LIE Design Plaza, 216 Mayapis Garcia St., Bonifacio Bypass, Bel-Air II, Makati City.

Gerodias' repertoire includes "Regnavit" from the opera "Giulio Cesare" by Frederick Handel, "O del mio dolce ardor," Pamela Angel praise" and "Spirate" by Stefano Donaudy; "Habanera, Lieberlied" and Intermezzo by Robert Schumann; "Hello, hello" from "The Telephone" by Gian Carlo Menotti; "Bosch fi ores sus" from "La Bohemia" by Giacomo Puccini; "Ave maria de vilma mogilat" from "Dos Hogazas" by Gustavo Escobedo; "Ave Kolnes pa mani" by Angel Perez; "Bienvenue ay Julia" by Ricardo Abelardo; and "Ave Rebelione" by Manuel Velez. Well-known pianist Najib Jouail will accompany her.

The UST Singers repertoire includes Gerald Finzi's "Let Me Hie Hidalsi), "Ha (aeroplane)" (Jorge Tarrazona), "Ave Gratia Cumulus" (arr. Manuel Grabal, "Down by the Riverside" (Negro Spiritual), "Ezra Ta" (arr. Ed Espinosa-arr.), "Everytime I Feel the Spirit" (arr. Rick Chilcott), "Ina Ha (Ina ng Diyos)" (Ricchey Ian Lucio Sanchez), "Journey on" (Stephen Hallock) (arr. Heidi Cushing, S.J., "New Music" (Stephen Flaherty), "Learning to Let Go" (Janet Hood) (arr. Heidi Grabing Ar), "Islanding Fellas," "Magnum in B flat," "Bare Bird," Broadway Con Bate (arr. Heidi Grabing Ar).

UST SINGERS

FIDEL Calalang, UST choral conductor

Top soprano and premier choral group duet in a concert

Highlight

For the highlight of the evening, Gerodias and the UST singers will sing "Sen Kaya ang Kapalaran?" (arr. Fidel Calalang Ar.) and "Auld Lang Syne" (arr. Hallstrom Widner).

The recently invitational concert is a special concert of LIE Design Plaza to its guests and clients, and to the designers and architects in the industry.

LIE Design Plaza has become the design hub for upcoming and established designers of many disciplines with over 40 showrooms featuring world-class Philippine-made furniture, furnishings, carpets, lighting systems, artifacts, paintings, available kitchen systems, fabrics/carpets, high photographic and interior design studios. In addition are leisure establishments such as restaurants, food spa, a yoga studio and a dance studio.

A product of the UST Conservatory of Music and Technion School of Music in New York, Gerodias is an alto awards Hall of Fame for Best Female Classical Performer and First Prize winner in the Gino Bloemberg Musicale Vocal Competition in Syracuse, New York in 1995.

She has played lead roles in more than 20 opera productions in the US and the Asia Pacific, which include Despina in Mozart's "Cosi Fan Tutte" (Japan, 2004); Kitty in "The Student Prince," Micaela in "Carmen," Susanna in "Le Nozze di Figaro" and Lia in "Turandot" (Singapore).

For her European debut as Violetta Valery in Verdi's operatic classic "La Traviata" in Vienna, Gerodias bagged the Rachelle Gerodias Award in Puccini's "Rondine" as Lia. She opened 2009 as guest soloist of the Sarajevo Philharmonic in its New Year concert at the National Theatre of Sarajevo.

Official artists

The UST Singers, led by conductor and founder Prof. Fidel G. Calalang Jr., have completed 15 concert tours around Europe, the United States, Canada, Mexico and Asia.

They have won more than 40 top prizes in international choral competitions in Spain, Hungary, Taiwan and Vietnam.

They were the official artists of the World Expo in Germany and Spain, and they have sung for Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, the King and Queen of Spain, and even Luciano Pavarotti. Their Festival Europa tour has just renewed Spain, Germany, France, Belgium, and Italy.

Call LIE Design Plaza at tel. nos. 899-1772, 895-7401.

RACHELLE Gerodias

Collecting real, raw... From page D1

after the Japanese tried to hack it to pieces and burn it.

Even the creation of a bust is a mystical process, Quirino says.

"There were studies to old men, carved in isolation in the forest, during a season like rainy that lasted as long as 30 days, during which time they had no food, no drink, no sex. That's why they were numb a lot. And the payment was never in money. For every piece of the creation, from finding the best to installing the finish, there is a person who commissioned the piece would have to lend the artist village."

No more 'bulol'

Sadly, Quirino says, with the pace Ifugao culture slowly dying, there are really no old "bulols" to be found anymore. "O, the few we see are just regurgitating stuff they don't want, pieces they bought only on."

Aside from our important Asist, which he knows to be still in its original home site, "most of the best museum pieces in the world are Manila."

And how did that happen?

"Foreigners who first began studying indigenous primitive art made the connection, and came here because they knew what they were looking for," Quirino explains.

Some proof: the Barbier-Mueller Museum in Geneva has a bulol that was taken from Asist and auctioned in his from the 16th century, the oldest proven extant piece.

Last December, a 500-centimeter bulol that had been at the Linden Museum in Stuttgart, Germany since 1901 was sold at Sotheby's for 20,000 euros, and the Museo de Arte Popular in Pais, which Quirino visits while planning a major show on Philippine tribal art in 2010.

HUMAN jawbone used as gong/handle, one of Quirino's first purchases (right) another early purchase, a tattoo motifs in the shape of a man holding a head

From ignorance

There's why Quirino still it a "topend" when people label such art "exotic," because it's an observation that comes primarily from ignorance. "Exotic, primitive? Look at it as a sculptural form—the volume in the legs, the tension in the hair, ..."

After all these years, Quirino can soon tell from right what is good and what isn't. "It's the same thing with wines—you've got your regs—there's a bad Bordeaux and a very good Bordeaux; a bad Chateauneuf, and a magnificent Chateauneuf. It's the hierarchy of values. But every piece was a genius."

It also helps that Quirino has been trolling antique shops since he was a child, encouraging his grandparents or his Mahtan or getting him to Bombay on the furniture market in Baguio. Even his family had a museum at home.

"Today Bishop is full of beautiful pieces, but before, it was marginal," he sighs. "It smelled old, and the owners of the dealers were there—Pinky Gracia Magsaysay, Eddie Mercado, the Tuason brothers. It was the owners of the made his figure stuff at Spanish colonial stuff from floors—some of which I could afford. I was just a rascal, so I just drooled."

First purchase

Eventually, Quirino befriended many dealers, and made his first actual "purchases of substance." One is a tattoo motifs (copy, a real human jawbone used as a gong handle, which he bought from Roland Go for P250.

"They would use the jawbone of a beheaded enemy, and the end of this bone was supposed to give the gong more resonance," Quirino explains, delicately cooling the piece. "Look at this beautiful patina!"

The other purchase, from Eddie Marcelo, is less morbid—a tattoo motif he shaped like a man holding a severed head. It came with a matching head-severed, and cost P150.

"But after that, I couldn't buy anything anymore, not even strawberries," he says with a laugh. "Then my mother would ask, 'Are we just?'"

"I don't know what drives me to these. Maybe I need to find a different way to express that way? I like my ordinary lifestyle, a quiet life for me?"—he points to his wooden Virgin—"And you that's Bobby Arl, Ill take that any time. I just have that tendency against over-refinement."

Today Quirino, 48, divides his time between his successful Makati antique shop, Deus, and his writing. Sadly, though, although there is a network of relatively young collectors like us, this may just stop at our generation. There's nothing more for younger collectors to be exposed to."

"BUSOT," circa 17th century

Writer-director Floy Quintos' childhood fascination with primitive art has made him one of the most knowledgeable dealers and collectors in the country today

Repertory holds acting courses

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES IS ACCEPTING enrollees for its 2009 Summer Acting Workshops.

Advanced Acting Workshop is open to students of past workshops who are thinking of a possible career in theater. Covered are advanced principles of acting such as technique, script analysis, character analysis, scene work, improvisation, projection of the voice, and voice intensity. The course culminates in the staging of a one-night play or musical.

Adult Beginners Acting Workshop is open to adults 27 years old and above, who have no previous acting or workshop experience. Basics also will cover the proper use of the voice, the use of the actor's body, and challenging the mind and sensitivity of the artist.

Repertory Summer Camp is open to children from ages five to 14 years old. Various theater games are designed specifically to help children acquire confidence, coordination and agility, memorization, and self-reliance, fluency and meaningful thinking. The workshops are divided into the Kiddies Class (five to eight years old), Pre-Teens Class (nine to 12 years old), and Teens Class (13-16 years old).

Voice Classes offer an integrated approach to studying basic vocal mechanique, and the art of singing.

All acting classes begin on March 30, and will culminate in a recital in Meyer Dunlap Theater, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City, on 6:30 p.m. Building C, Greenhills Plaza, 253 Ortigas Jr., Ortigas Extension, Pasig City.

Summer theater workshops in Cebu

LITTLE BOY PRODUCTIONS SUMMER kick-off Theater Workshops for Kids and Teens, to be held at the old cockpit of Mango Avenue, Cebu City, April 14-May 2.

To be offered are Theater for Kids (four to six years old), Children's Musical Theater (seven to 10 years old), and Musical Theater for Teens (11 years old and up). Participants will be organized to 15 sessions of theater training, culminating in a Broadway musical showcase to be held at the Grand of Theater.

Faculty will include Mr. Peter, BM, Theatre Arts graduate of Ateneo de Manila University, who performed the lead role in Disney's "Aladdin" for Repertory Philippines; Rob Amadeo, an accomplished actor who played Jean in the hit off-Broadway musical "Altar Boyz" also for Repertory Philippines; and Zeke in the Asian premiere of Disney's "High School Musical" in 2007), and actor-model Amy Aguilar.

Workshop fee is P6,000.

Call 254-9333, 233-0432 or 09221-8500298, or visit Little Boy Productions at Bistro Arbolario, 3/F Mercure Plaza, Ayala Fuente, on Ellingin Avenue.

National Book Store opens in Sta. Maria, Bulacan

Retail shoppers from Sta. Maria, Bulacan and nearby areas have a new shopping destination in National Book Store Walter Mart.

Located at the heart of Sta. Maria, the newest provincial outlet maintains the same quality standards that have made NBS a household name. The distinct red and white insignia has wide selection of books, and the complete assortment of school and office supplies are all unmistakably the National Book Store we have come to know and love through the years.

Visit NBS Walter Mart at Provincial Rd. cor. Bypass Rd. Brgy. Sta. Clara, Sta. Maria, Bulacan.

For a complete directory of all NBS branches nationwide, visit http://www.nbs-online.com.

Mayor Severino Ramos at the opening of National Book Store Walter Mart in Sta Maria, Bulacan.

A branch advocate of reading in the country, National Book Store welcomes a new addition to its ever-awful chain of bookstores. And readers and local patronizers now have a new shopping destination in National Book Store Walter Mart located at Provincial Rd. cor. Bypass Rd. Brgy. Sta. Clara, Sta. Maria, Bulacan.

Silliman national writers' workshop accepting applications

THE SILLIMAN NATIONAL WRITERS Workshop is now accepting applications for the 40th National Writers Workshop to be held May 4-15 in Dumaguete City.

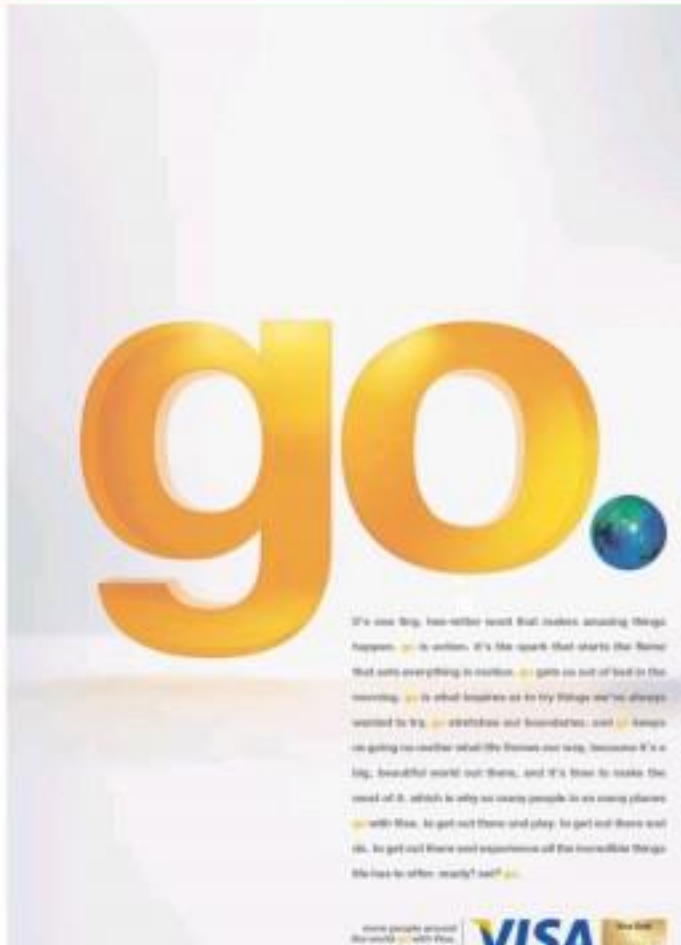
The workshop is offering 15 fellowships to promising young writers who would like a chance to hone their craft and refine their style. Fellows will be provided housing, a modest stipend, and a subsidy to partially defray costs of their transportation.

To be considered, applicants should submit manuscripts in English on or before March 27 (seven to 10 poems; or three to five short stories; or three to five creative non-fiction essays).

Manuscripts should be submitted in hard copy and on CD, preferably in MS Word format, together with a resume, a recommendation letter from a literature professor or a writer of national standing, a certification that the works are original, and one 2x2 ID picture.

Send all applications to Department of English and Literature, Attn: Prof. Ira G. Solma, chair, Silliman University, 6200 Dumaguete City.

E-mail: englishdept@su.edu.ph, or go to the workshop website at www.geocities.com/travels-magazine.



ANAPORRA: de Guzman and Della Besa

Besa, De Guzman in concert

THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES (CCP) presents duo pianists Della G. Besa and Anamaria G. de Guzman in "Duo," a two-piano concert on March 31, 7:30 p.m., at the Little Theater. The concert is in celebration of the CCP's 40th anniversary.

"Duo" is the term for "two" in Italian, Basque and Hungarian dialects. In the concert, Besa and De Guzman give an overview of the existing repertoire of Filipino duo-piano music in folk song arrangements, and original compositions of Buencamino, Cayabyab, Kasilag and Balanon.

Two-piano arrangements of popular songs—"Isda Ko," "Hanggang sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," "Himagsikan at Pag-ibig," "Sana Bukangliwayway," "Gitarang Pilak," "Sana Ikaw na Nga," "Gising Na," "Ikaw Lamang"—and a medley of the themes of some "international" will be performed by the two pianists.

Besa and De Guzman have been playing together for 26 years in 70 concerts. They have performed in major cities here and in Washington, New York, San Francisco and Chicago in the United States.

Bookstore holds forum on savings

AMID THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS, Powerbooks-Specialty Store is holding "Get Rich! Learn to Save and Invest," a forum by top financial advisor Melvin Escobar, on March 28, 1 p.m., at Powerbooks, Greenbelt 4.

The forum will provide practical tips on personal savings. Topics include preparing your personal cash flow statement, balance sheet and budgeting, as well as tips on how to invest wisely and how concepts such as risk-return trade-off can be applied in everyday life.

Other topics include: risk control, creation of personal portfolios, asset allocation, and an overview of the different investment instruments currently available in the market.

Escobar is the first Filipino to receive the Young Asset Manager of the Year award in 2007.

Interested participants can register at your nearest Powerbooks branch. Workshop fee is P2,500. Powercard and Powercard Plus holders get a special discount of P250 upon payment.

Powerbooks has branches at Greenbelt 4 (757-1628 to 29), Megamall (633-2898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (850-5682 to 84), Glorietta 3 (750-9975), Shangri-la (638-0003/241), Robinson's Place Manila (567-7703), Mall of Asia (556-02444), Festival Supermall (850-8221), Trinoma (912-1561/62) and SM Cebu (0933-238-5566/68).

Lito Enrico G. Velarde

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Marian: 'I'm only human'

By Rayner San Diego Jr.

THE LAST FEW MONTHS HAVE BEEN stressful for Marian Rivera, who confessed to press execs that she owns Dingdong Dantes from Kaya'ke and that she's not the sweet starlet she played on GMA 7 drama shows "Marinara" and "Sweetheart."

When the going got tough, Marian quit a contract. At a recent gathering with the press, the actress said she has learned to be kind to herself.

"I used to think only of work and business matters," she confessed. "Now, I've learned to reward myself for my hard work." Last time she did, she went on a trip to Suarez.

"I bought a Chanel bag and shoes," she admitted, "having the designer labels. I only go for Gucci, Chanel and Louis Vuitton."

But she hastened to add that she's no shopaholic. "I make sure that everything I buy is truly useful."

She's really quite practical, unlike her TV alter ego, the flighty and flaky Yvonnelina of the Eugene-artwork's new prime time series, "Ang Babaeng Hinugot sa Aking Tadyang."

"Challenging," she described the new soap. "More actions and a bit sexy. I'm not an epileptic here, Yvonnelina is fighter."

She said Yvonnelina possesses traits both lovable and loathsome. "I can't relate with her because I'm a homebody. Yvonnelina is flamboyant. But she'll do anything for her family."

Actually, there's a talk that Sen. Ked Pie Gordon may soon become a departure. Marian said she will be seriously listen to audience feedback. "We always have meetings to discuss which direction to take next."

In one way conference, for instance, they decided to "soften" Yvonnelina's harshness. "We will show her back story so that people will understand her. That's what viewers seem to want—seeing our personality."

Marian also got the chance to show a more vulnerable side after she was deluged with negative publicity resulting from the Dingdong-Jennylle split-up.

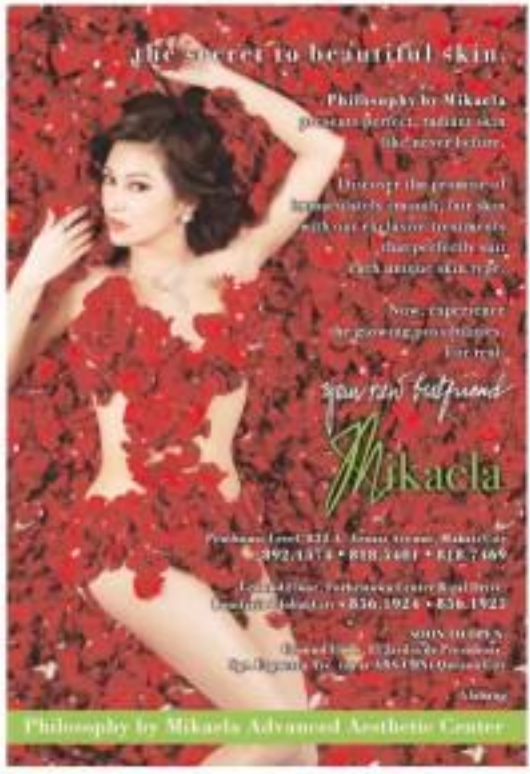
At the height of the controversy, she recalled, "A lot of press people told me to ignore the intrigues and not to be too sensitive."

She said she listens to all the advice. "I'm only human. I accept constructive criticism, but I also get hurt and fight back if I'm trapped in."

E-mail: bayanmodern@hotmail.com

CHEER FACTOR

LOS ANGELES—Brad Pitt and Natalie Portman will pair up on the big screen in a romantic comedy that the actors also will co-produce, Variety reported Wednesday. Pitt, 45, is also co-starring in Quentin Tarantino's next film "Inglourious Basterds." AFP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that perfectly suit
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the growing possibilities
for real
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Mikaela
Philosophy by Mikaela Advanced Aesthetic Center

Rihanna beating inspires video

DID YOU KNOW...

NEW YORK—THE alleged beating of Rihanna has inspired an online public service announcement about young violence by the teen organization Do Something.org. The video features teens recreating the pop star's highly publicized confrontation with her boyfriend, singer Chris Brown.

The brief clip can be viewed on YouTube. AP

"You are an inspiration to us. I hope that I will be like you – a very good public speaker."
– Marese Arreza
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GMA
Z
ANG TANYAG NA SAGISAG NG KATAPANGAN...

Shaky start for 'Cool Center'

LAST MARCH 14, "COOL CENTER" made its debut on GMA-7, and we caught the show despite its late-late time slot because we thought that its co-hosts, Eugene Domingo and Anjo Yllana, were an interesting new tandem.

That, they were—but the show wasn't all that hot because they were too hyper, overacting out their greetings like the microphone had yet to be invented. Later in the telecast, they relaxed and worked well together, so that was all to the good.

But, both Anjo and Eugene need to pick up their acts a few notches. In debut shows, that's a very time-honored, teaming-strategy here with a lot of lame greetings and gags. More time was taken up "proving" that the show was being done "live"—whatever for?

Happily, the show perked up after that, and the hosts should be commended for upping the ante in this regard. Unfortunately, some features turned out to be duds—like the show's "surrogate" version of a dating game, with phone-in dates being sketched by the show's resident artist, based on their descriptions of themselves.

The particular gimmick was so flawed by phone and sound problems, that it was downplayed as the show progressed. Other features were more productive, as the first appearance of "Cool Center" wasn't a botch.

In fact, it perked up a lot towards the end, with its "soup" on the Pope Annur Envelope, courtesy of Anjo's brother, Annur Ulama, who opted to give the new show his first (and only!) extended television shout-out and Pope "translation" split after four years of no-performers.

In fact, Annur's sent out a real zinger when he Mr Pogi former husband, Martin Nievera, for commenting at length on the breakup. Annur's well-placed zinger made have left Martin wonderin' because he subsequently issued a statement that he would stop talking about the "issue" from here on in.

With the help of Annur's marvelous interview, "Cool Center" garnered a lot of attention, as Anjo should thank his brother for being so helpful. But what will the show do to sustain or top that coup on its subsequent airings?

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

'Terminator Salvation'

Christian Bale and Sam Worthington headline legendary director-writer-producer James Cameron's "Terminator Salvation," set in post-apocalypse 2018, the film casts Bale as John Connor, who's hired to lead human resistance against Skynet and its army of Terminators. But the future Connor was raised to believe so, is allowed in part by the appearance of Marcus Wright ("Worthington"), a stranger whose last memory is of being on Death Row.

'Fe Competition'

Cynthia Heath and Nissa will host its first "Fe Competition" on noon on March 29 at the Activity Area of Starmall Edsa-Shaw. The event is a bodybuilding competition, bench press exercise challenge and recognition of Filipino bodybuilders who've won in international competitions. Call 716-4099.

'Fuenta'

From Feb. 20 to 23, over 10,000 people were treated to a story watched "Fuenta," a film about Hermana Fuenta Lahendor, founder of Sacred Heart College, which is celebrating its 125th anniversary. The film was screened at Cinema 2 of SM Fuenta City.

Written by Nestor Cuenca Fuenta and directed by Felipe Taliada, "Fuenta" featured acclaimed actors Perla Bautista and Tommy Abad, as well as other fine performers like Maggay Zaragoza, Josefina Sam, Cesar Montano, Bembol Cortes, Mommy Jacklene Marquez and Mabel Lazaro-Rodin. Rosina played the role with distinction, while Abad reaped the role of the guest liberal artist, Armando Amorsolo, who painted the portrait of Hermana Beatrix's real life.

Sacred Heart College plans to screen "Fuenta" in other schools and communities, to bring Christian values to the people's hearts through Hermana Fuenta's inspiring life story.

AT LEFT, Eddie and Sylvia Barrie (seated, center) celebrate Christmas with their family, including six children and 11 grandchildren. Above, neophyte congressman shakes hands with President Diosdado Macapagal in 1965. Behind them is Executive Secretary Fidel Rechavez.

WITH Leila Benitez and Pepe Pimentel (R) on "Student Canteen."

CONFERRING with Gerry Roxas after the Plaza Miranda bombing

Reminiscing with Kuya Eddie

The host of 'Kahapon Lamang' takes his own trip down memory lane

By Reuben Sanchez Dingle Jr.
Photos by Rudel Ramirez

LIKE A BADGE OF honor, he shows off his scar from the 1971 Plaza Miranda bombing.

Eddie Barrie, broadcaster and politician, lifts his pants to reveal a deep gash on his right leg. "I almost completely lost my leg," he says. "It was just reinstalled. Until now, there's a steel rod in there. And when it's cold or raining, my leg hurts and I walk with a limp."

But the tragedy catapulted the radio man into the national arena. With the sober sensibilities of the liberal Party, Barrie was elected senator that year.

It was a circuitous journey to the august halls of the Senate for the Camarines Sur native, "We were dirt poor," he recalls.

His parents, Emilio and Agapita, were both schoolteachers. The young Barrie also took an interest in teaching, but he also knew instinctively that media would be a potent tool for educating the masses.

"I always wanted to be a radio announcer," says Barrie, who took up Journalism at the Far Eastern University. At age 21, he was taken by surprise at GMR.

"Out of 3,000 who auditioned, only two got in," he looks back. The eager hearer reported for work in the old RBS (Republic Broadcasting System, precursor of GMA 7) station at the Cubao building along Aurora.

"But I made a mistake on-air and was sacked. I was fired before I was even hired," he says, laughing. Luckily he was taken in by Nap Oliver at dzBS.

Mentors

He considers Oliver and Ike Tiaoo as his mentors. "I worked as all-around errand for P500 a month," he remembers. "In the old days, you went through an initiation—start from the bottom and work your way up. You had to learn the ropes. You couldn't just sit over to a turntable and call yourself an announcer."

That was 1953.

The first time his voice was heard on the radio, it was for the 12 o'clock station break. "I was screaming bullets," he recalls. "I was on record: 'I arrived at the studio at 9 a.m.' His line: 'This is BBC, the Middle Road-casting Company, DZBS. This is the voice of the Philippines. The time at the tone is 12 high noon.'"

He remembers: "You have to time it well. When you said '12 high noon,' it should be exactly 11:59:55, to skip the seconds for the beep."

After that auspicious debut, Oliver called Barrie to his office and gave the neophyte a pat on the back. "That was a good job, Eddie. But did you have to shout?"

Still, his enthusiasm yielded results. Soon enough, the "station break" announcer earned his own program, "A Date with the Stars," where he played records of Nat King Cole, Mr. Emmons and Frank Sinatra.

In 1953, he was pirated by the newly opened CBS (Chronicle Broadcasting Network) and worked alongside another legend, the late great Tiya Dely Magpayo.

They had a radio show, "Sid Only at 10 Eddie," no doubt.

It was while in dzBS that he came up with the concept of "Student Canteen." Originally the seven-hour radio show, hosted by singer Priscilla, was called "CBN Canteen."

"It was held at the CBN canteen at the old Chronicle Building on Aduana," Barrie says. "But Priscilla got married and was replaced by Leila Benitez."

Barrie, then the show's first commercial announcer, noticed that students from nearby schools like Letrán would troop to the radio booth to gawk at Benitez.

"I suggested that we hold the show live in the canteen again and invite students to audience members," he says, to defend.

When CBS merged with ABS (or Alto Broadcasting System) in 1957, "Student Canteen" the radio lunchtime sensation crossed over to television, with Benitez, Barrie, Bobby Ledesma and Hope Hermosa as hosts and Amado Pagano as pianist.

Barrie left ABS-CBN in 1965 and later moved, with Benitez, to Channel 11 with their show, "Tanghali Jamboree."

In 1972, martial law was declared and saw a chapter in broadcasting was no more... with Barrie among its foremost victims.

He and Ledesma saw the need to revive their "Student Canteen" on GMA 7 in 1975. It was the show's second generation that Leila was already in the US," says Barrie. The search for a new female host produced Ginny Reyes, then a fresh Maryknoll graduate.

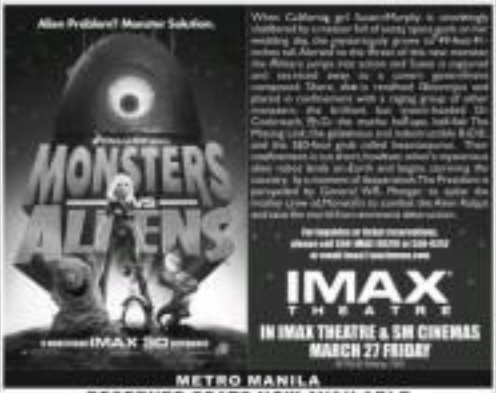
"I'm proud that we discovered Ginny," he says. "She epitomized the youth of that era. She's intelligent and talented."

Barrie also pushed news coverage as other would-be broadcasting icons, the late Howie Severino.

"She was a singing commentator on the first 'Student Canteen' in the

PRESENT-DAY setting: Kuya Eddie recently turned to civic gardening

SM CINEMA movietime



When Callaway girl Susan Murphy is unwittingly victimized by cosmic bolt of lightning upon getting on her wedding day, she presumingly grows 50 ft tall in inches tall. Altered as the threat of this new monster she always jumps into action and Susan is captured and rendered mute by a cosmic government experiment. Thus, she is named Ginormica and placed in confinement with a motley group of other monsters: the brilliant, but insect-headed Dr. Cockroach, Ph.D.; the mutha halfpipe, lookalike The Missing Link; the gelatinous and totally lovable B.O.B.; and the 350-foot grub called Insectosaurus. Then, when terror in the form of Gallaxhar, whom is rumored to be an intergalactic warlord, lands on Earth and begins storming the country, it is moments of desperation. The President is persuaded by General W.R. Monger to enlist the mother crew of Monsters to combat the Alien Robot and save the world from extraterrestrial destruction.

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METRO EAST

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NOVALICHES

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PIONEER

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2 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
3 SUNDO
4 THE PUNISHER

STA. ROSA

1 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
2 THE PUNISHER
3 SHAOLIN GIRL
4 SUNDO

LIPA

1 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
2 SUNDO
3 THE PUNISHER
4 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE

DASMARINAS

1 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
2 THE PUNISHER
3 SUNDO
4 STREETFIGHTER

IMUS

1 SUNDO
2 THE PUNISHER
3 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
4 STREETFIGHTER

ANGELES

1 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
2 SUNDO
3 STREETFIGHTER
4 THE PUNISHER

STARMILLS

1 THE PUNISHER
2 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
3 SHAOLIN GIRL
4 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
5 SUNDO
6 STREETFIGHTER

BACOLOD

1 RACE to WITCH MOUNTAIN
2 WATCHMEN
3 THE PUNISHER
4 SHAOLIN GIRL
5 SUNDO
6 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE

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1 WATCHMEN
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5 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
6 STREETFIGHTER

Reminiscing with Kuya Eddie

From page E2

1960s," Eddie relates. "She was set to go into concert. I told her: 'As a singer, you can be a better announcer.' She heeded his advice.

In the mid-1970s, he hired Nita as co-host on "Sunshine Show," a game show aired before "Student Canteen."

He joined GMA 7 as block-time producer for Progress Philippines. "We presented stellar shows like the first Inday Badiday, 'Eagle' and the first drama anthology 'Kahapon Lamang,'" he says.

"Kahapon Lamang" is also the title of his long-running radio show which spawned the popular catch phrases "Maputi-okol, Kuya Eddie" and "Maraming salamat po!"

Old school

When he started "Kahapon Lamang," the radio show in 1969, he admits, he was ill-equipped to document whatever he broadcast. "The original concept was that I would only play true songs. But before long, listeners started writing in their love stories or they requested for their theme songs."

Typically, as an ex-counselor he did research. "I was still young, playing advice based on the experiences of other

RADIOCASTER Leonard publicizes a political Party write

listeners. So I read books and studied psychology," he says.

His mentors Oliver and Nina considered Eddie the epitome of a program host for the job. "I'm old school," he says. "Before going to air, we made sure that we thoroughly studied the subject matter. We didn't just sit there and talked nonsense. We read books and newspapers."

He still puts this training to good use, hosting "Kahapon Lamang, the Second 50 Years" on dzIM, every Saturday, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Although the father of 6 and grandfather of 11 claims that he is already retired, he still juggles numerous projects. He recently launched a CD of standards "Forever Singles' Vol. 1" (with the likes of Edward Hagedorn and Rosemoore Adaza as vocalists) and authored "The Book of Seniors."

Two more books are in the works, he says. "One on the Mabuhay and another on the golden age of radio and television."

Apart from the rights and welfare of "older people," he has also taken up rice gardening. Three days, he is kept busy with a 500-square-meter rice paddy in Alfonso, Cavite. He recently harvested "one and a half cuts of rice. I don't have to line up at the NFA (National Food Authority) anymore."

Yet, it's his service to Radio Active as host/columnist, his greatest accomplishment in broadcasting is that he helped discover and develop hosts like Boots Anson-Roa, Mitch Valdes, Jacqueline Munoz and Chiqui Hollmann, and singers like Joan Rivas, Eliseo Soto and the late Joe Lalada.

If he turns in the keys, he puts, he may revive his classic lunchtime disco, combining old vinyl like Bisco and Hollmann with new favorites like Hole Barrah and Marlon Rivera. The title? "Student Canteen Reloaded," he quips, with a hearty laugh.

DIANTES with Schwarzenegger

RP martial...

From page E1

time between 1997 and 1998. In the '90s, he played 6th and 5th in the 5th Udinese competition won by actor—now California governor—Arnold Schwarzenegger, and actor Lou Diamon, respectively.

Advocacy

"He has done so much in the field of martial arts, specifically arnis," said Chris. "He was a big help to (Makiling) Boy Ilagan in creating the Arnis Bill. He voluntered arnis to be the national sport."

Ilagan, who was last seen in the Australian comedy flick "Dogs in Space" (2002), was a member of the Actor's Guild of the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAP). He was also a member of the Actor's Equity of the Australian Film Institute.

Workshops

He first appeared in the local production of action film "The Facts Commission" (1974). It is set in the Philippines when ruled by Spain. Three years later, he joined the cast of Eddie Romero's "Banta ng Kahapon," which also featured Vic Vargas and Rudolf Rocco. He was also part of the epic film "Lapu-Lapu" (1982), co-helmed by Lino Brocka.

At the time of his death, Diantes was enacting arnis workshops all over the country. He was also preparing a video and a book version on arnis and other fields of martial arts that were supposed to be published in Australia.

Pops: Jom treated me well

POPS FERNANDEZ IS TRYING TO COPE with the pain of her breaking with **Jessanet Tiliano** by being busy with the United States leg of the "Divas 4 Divas" concert tour. Even after they parted ways, a bundle between her exist existed. **Marlin Nierras** said he didn't like the fact that Jom hasn't Pilipay from Emil back, saying Marlin should've stood up for him when he's not there.

Since Pipay is like a sister to me, I don't wanna add fuel to the fire by writing about the issue. But since her Jom issue is right in front, I prodded Pipay to give her final word.

Her text message from the States reads: "I really want this story to die down already ... It's hard to deal with relentless fault finders. Jom treated me well when we were together so I'm hoping the issue will [have ended] by the time I get back so we can both move on and still be friends."

The aftermath of a romance is never an easy thing especially for Pipay, whose heart has been broken over and over again (for knowing her, she'll bounce back even stronger). Let's see how it turns out because she has always given it her all.

Sweet revenge

Lovelle replaces **Marian Rivera** as redhead of Blue Water Day Spa. Is it a case of sweet revenge, since Marian has long been pregnant as it's replacement is known what we had to learn.

Pinay Zorro

Eddie Tu, Filipinized version of the saga of Zorro, a skilled businessman fighter who becomes the champion of the masses, premieres tonight. **Richard Gutierrez** has leading ladies **Rhian Ramos**, **Bianca King** and **Michelle Madrigal**. The superstar of who he will end up with in the series and in real life remains. That should keep his fans captivated and make "Zorro" won in the ratings.

Summer ID

ABS-CBN's summer station ID boasts with love for country. It shows stars building homes for the poor, cleaning a river, sweeping streets, bonding kids among other community activities. The lively song in the music video performed by **Billy Crawford**, **Julia Lloyd Cruz**, **Luis Manzano** and **Vhong Navarro** is about spending love everyday for Kapamilyas, it's summertime and the getting's easy.

PEEKABOO. Bachelorette pedrito in Pilipinas Pinoy, Gabby Libiran and Carla Humphrey for a super fun interview/pictorial for the Manila ezine Pinoy Women of DC and now in DC magazine.

Thanks a lot to my friend from way back, gorgeous Georgette Tangco of MTV Philippines and Divine Intrigo and Manuel Reyes of Grand for their kind assistance.

E-mail watchgirlentertainment@yahoo.com

ROLAND Dantes with Hollywood action star Chuck Norris

RP martial arts master, actor takes final bow

By Marinel R. Cruz

"HE WAS REACTIVE AS A HORSE. HIS death came as a shock to me," said rapper Chris Dantes, nephew of actor and martial arts grand master Roland Dantes, who died of multiple organ failure arising from complications due to gastrointestinal infection on March 16. He was 59.

Roland will be laid to rest at the Heaven's Rest Memorial Park in Antipolo City today after the 2 p.m. Mass at the Marian Memorial Chapel on Marcos Highway, also in Antipolo City.

He was rushed to the Philippine Heart Center in Quezon City on March 15. He had had a swollen right leg for three days. He was pronounced dead on arrival at 1:32 a.m.

Party food

Chris said his uncle attended a birthday party on March 13. "Since he was so hungry, he ate a lot of the food that was served ... crispy pata. The next day, his right foot was already swollen," Chris told the Inquirer in a phone interview on Saturday. "From what I read about gout on the Internet, it gets worse if not treated immediately. My uncle simply took pain killers and refused to be taken to the hospital."

Da Kuding Dantes, who was president and chair of the Philippine Council of Kali Eskrima Arnis Modernx, attended a day-long meeting with fellow martial arts masters. "He never knew. When he came home, half of his leg was swollen to three times its normal size and his foot was bloated," Chris added. "He had a hard time breathing, but he still didn't want to see his doctors. He just wanted to rest."

Aneurysm

Around midnight, Chris said he heard noise coming from Dantes' bedroom. "I found him there writhing in pain, saying 'Iyong ko ho po eh!' His speech was already impaired. I also saw blood in his urine basin. That probably signaled that his kidneys had failed. I didn't know he was dying in my arms."

Chris said Dantes underwent surgery for heart aneurysm in 2006. "He became health-conscious after that experience. He refused to eat red meat or salty food."

Dantes, Reinaldo Tangco Pineda Dantes in real life, was the 2004 Filipino Martial Arts (FMA) Digest Man of the Year. He also won the Mr. Philippines title seven

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It must be the hair

Nothing beats having a full head of hair.

Actor/Businessman Joey Marquez wears every second. Takes 60s pleasure in its push. He secret. He got his hair back. "Nothing beats having a full head of hair. I lost it since when I was going bald ... but look at me now. I couldn't ask for more."

Indeed, life for Joey keeps getting better. Way much better than when he was the butt of jokes, being called "kuang" in "komagose" and felt less desirable in women because of baldness. "Those were 15 tough years of my life. At first I just played the jokes to my advantage because I am a comedian. But deep inside I was really desperate to get my hair back. I looked at myself in the mirror, thinking if only I could get my hair back," he recalls.

Having lost self-confidence, looking much older, with roaming tendency and vigor. Those are just some of the known baldism impacts and Joey was no exception. "Whenever I approached women, most of them usually laughed at me. I decided do something about my hair also. Of course, I didn't experience that before. I also felt self-conscious in front of the camera. And I was always mindful that people would just immediately see that I'm bald spot," he says.

Joey decided to look for solutions. "I've read about all of the remedies. But I just got premature, not senile. Tan ako yung mas nakakatanda ng dad ed. I was desperate for baldism solutions and ended up disappointed. But when a friend suggested getting professional treatments at Avenues, I said: oge why not. I thought napuro cure do something lapse sa sunglasshole ako sa solutions. Then enough, in just a few sessions of Avenues's treatments, a miracle happened! I got my full head of hair back. No more bald spot. Galing!"

There's no more turning back for Joey. He's living life much better now. "My confidence is back. I'm definitely back. My career upon, traveling ... everything. Women now smile at me and say, 'You look like you're not getting older.' I could smile under a conversation and pull my sweet moves. I have the best time of my life. It must be the hair!"

Learn more about the Avenues treatments that brought back Joey Marquez's full head of hair. Call 892-HAIR (4247)/256-0811 (Cebu) now for your FREE private consultations.

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LEARNING

What Joan Goulbourn learned from Slims / F4

Students' innovative uses for mobile phones / F1

Slims: Iconic designer as mentor

Salvacion Lim Higgins could spot talent, and her students would blaze their own trails in Philippine fashion

By Kidz Veloso-Barrera
Contributor

A BOOK IS IN THE WORKS and a couple of exhibits are being readied to commemorate the contributions of Salvacion Lim Higgins to Philippine fashion, both as designer and as teacher.

The avant-garde fashion designer, who went by the acronym Slims, defined a career that spanned the late 1940s to the time of her death in 1998 with cutting-edge designs and personalized mentoring.

Come August at the Yuchengco Museum, the works of Slims and her son Mark Higgins will be part of "Pull Cords: Condensing Artistry through Two Generations."

Later this year, there will be a retrospective exhibit honoring Slims at the National Museum.

The Slims Legacy Project is spearheading the production of the retrospective, as well as the coffee-table book, as a most auspicious way to celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Slims Fashion and Art School that she set up in 1960 with her sister Purificacion. So many of the designers who studied at Slims have been successful—either here or abroad: let's list it!—including Cesar Campo, Henry Po, Eddie Ocampo, Bobby Stevenson Jr., Oskar Penicela and the late Ace Soliman and Cathy Rodriguez.

Like many fashion icons, Salvacion's academic background was in the Fine Arts. She liked to paint so she enrolled at the University of Santo Tomas. Victor Edades was dean of the College of Fine Arts then and Botong Francisco was one of her teachers. Both would later be named National Artists.

The war interrupted Slims' studies. When it ended, she opened a shop with sister Purita that became a great success. The partners were quite knowledgeable, having been trained by a mother who designed and sewed her own attire. As children, Salvacion designed for them dolls and Purita made the dresses.

A stay in Europe in 1950-51 exposed Salvacion to the glories of haute couture. She attended the shows of the top designers, especially Christian Dior who revolutionized post-war fashion with the opulent and luxurious New Look. Slims also got a good look at the haute couture by Cristobal Balenciaga, Elsa Schiaparelli and Jacques Fath, among others.

After Europe, Salvacion's next stop was New York, where she took courses at the Traphagen School of Fashion, which was known for its technical orientation to high fashion design and courses in pattern making and draping.

Back in Manila, she continued to devise her own patterns and methods for the extravagant shapes she had in mind.

When people began pressuring Slims for dressmaking lessons, Salvacion and Purita decided to open the school—an unusual decision. While most people would rather keep their business secrets to themselves, the Lim sisters were willing to share what

SLIMS / A2

Playgrounds for the MIND

Lilac Arce Espinosa

Member Schools

University of Batangas sent teacher delegate to Japan through AFS-Jenesys

TO PROMOTE MUTUAL UNDERstanding and trust through exchange programmes consisting of visiting histories and other relevant sites, educational institutions and a home stay, University of Batangas through American Field Service Japan-East Asia Network of Exchanges Students and Youth (AFS-Jenesys), sent Dr. Raul A. Ani to be one of the 64 Filipino participants who attended an exposure trip to Japan from December 1-20, 2008.

The participants from Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, India, Indonesia, New Zealand and Australia were grouped into two to visit interesting landmarks and sites that speak rich Japanese history and culture. They visited Kyoto where historically priceless structures across such as Arashiyama, Ginkakuji temple and Kiyomizudera Temple. They also toured in Kobe, the city associated with earthquakes and fashion, to look at Hokudan-cho, Earthquake Memorial park and Minatojima.

The more than 600 ambassadors travelled to their host community where they stayed with the host family, went to school and joined local activities. In this trip, they learned about calligraphy, Bonsai, tea ceremonies and courses. Dr. Raul Ani went to Tamura , Kumamoto-Ken and accommodated by Nishioka Kido and Yosuke Michiko.

From this immersion, the participants went back to Tokyo for a study tour visiting Sendai and Odaiba. The activity was capped off by a festival at Ryogoku Kokugikan where each country performed a cultural demonstration.

The AFS Jenesys Programme started at the 16th Asean - Japan Summit Meeting and the 2nd BAS held respectively on the 14th and 15th of January 2007 that Japan would further approximately 6, 000 youths each year for five years in order to help lay the foundation for solidarity in Asia. In order to fund he initiative, the Government of Japan contributed USD 295,372,072 to Japan Asean Integration Fund (JAIF).

DR. Raul A. Ani

CEU Malolos professor presents paper in UK Education Fair

IN THE U.K'S UK EDUCATION FAIR HELD at the SMX Convention Center, CEU Malolos professor, Marcie P. Lopez presented a forum on Philippine International English Language Conference his paper entitled, "The Inhouse Immersion Model to Designing Critical Thinking Lessons to Communication Skills."

Aside from convening the English experts and practitioners worldwide, the event also aimed at bringing a fresh dimension of relevant issues on teaching and learning English in the classroom. It also included in its sharing agenda the increasing demand for English speakers in the different areas of work life, especially the BPO sector.

In addition, an exhibit on the different study opportunities in the UK attracted the audience and the participants.

Jadaone bags Cinemanila Best Short Film

DALISDAN ANTOINETTE Jadaone's "Bandang Pesos" was named the Best Short Film in the Young Cinema category of the recently concluded Cinema One-manila.

The two organizers of the festival praised the film for its "clever use of one set of dialogue to construct and parallel the world of fantasy as a child and fantasy as a grown-up." They described Jadaone as one who, "deliberately has the short film medium and has the discipline to work within the limitations of it to produce a fun and very watchable short film."

The short, which runs for three to seven minutes, revolves around a man who is haunted by childhood memories of play "in a time and place where the stakes are bigger than being scolded by his nagging mother."

Jadaone, who has a degree in Film and Audio-Visual Communication from the University of the Philippines where she graduated cum laude in 2005, says "Bandang Pesos" is her first film in two years and Cinemanila, the first film to be shown privately for a film she made after college. Her earlier works have already earned her the respect of those in the film industry.

Working with a budget of only P12,000, Jadaone says she relied on a cast of non-actors. She acknowledges the help she received from her "film friends and colleagues in Alternate", where she was assistant director at the time she was working on her short film.

Jadaone finished high school in St. Paul College, Pasig in 2002 and previously handled the school's Video Production class under the OJT Program.

St. Paul College, Pasig, one of the country's premiere centers for basic education, is located near the Ortigas business and commercial district. For inquiries, please call 631-3631 or 631-1656.

5 golds for Arellano U's Grade 4 swimming star

KEITH KAOMI SIBOY, a Grade 4 pupil at the elementary department of Arellano University's Elsie Gaston campus in Malolos finished with a perfect score and hauled five gold medals at the City Schools Athletic Meet held recently at the Cuyo Sports Complex, Cabanatuan.

SIBOY

Keith Kaomi won the golds in the girls' category (elementary grade school pupils) for 50m freestyle, 50m butterfly, 100m freestyle, 100m butterfly, and 400m freestyle.

For her 5-for-5 gold medal harvest, Keith Kaomi was granted full athletic scholarship from Arellano University, upon the recommendation of AU Biñan alum AVP Ms. Cynthia C. Mariano, through Branch VP Alma C. Cunico and marketing VP Ms. Irene V. Lim, head of the AU Sports Development Program, and approved by AU chair Francisco PJ Cayco.

Earlier, she harvested four gold medals during the Batanes Invitational with her best clocks in 50m freestyle, 50m butterfly, 100m freestyle, and 100m butterfly.

In Ruth Nasseri's list of achievements in 2008 are: a gold medal in 50m butterfly, 50m freestyle, 100m freestyle, bronze in 100m backstroke, and a bronze in the 200m individual medley which she won at the Third POP Qualifying Games. In the same underwing competition, she also got the silver medal for overall performance in the 13-year old girls' category.

Late June, she took part in the Chairman's Cup swimming competition, and won the golds in 50m freestyle and 100m freestyle, silvers in 50m backstroke, 50m butterfly, and 200m individual medley.

During the 4th Electric Fan Swimming Competition, she won the gold in 200 butterfly.

San Sebastian College's free summer workshop

GRADE SCHOOL (GRADES 4-6) AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS (all levels including the graduating students) are invited to join the free "Digital Summer Workshop (Season 2)" to be held on Apr 8 20-24. Following are the workshops' lineup: Visioning Entrepreneurship, Computer Graphics Design (Adobe Photoshop), Flash Animation, Game Design (Ear Training Skills), Basic Acting, Hiphop, Basketball, and Acoustics (Guitar Lessons). Please register participants (indicating age/grade level and contact number) to Sarah_p@yahoo.com or fax the list through 734-8831 to 38 loc. 210, 114 or 116. Priority will be given to early registrants. Participants and the schools shall be given certificates plus media exposure for their good participation. A deadline of registration is on or before March 31. No fees shall be collected.

LTRLinx Challenge at Faith

FAITH ASIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND HUMANITIES, Dasmariñas announces its Elementary's Best 107 implementer, recently hosted LTRLinx Challenge for its students. Developed by Genyos Online Learning Management Program, LTRLinx is a multiplayer network word game competition which is based on creating anagrams or words spelled out by rearranging the letters of another word. It games master gave the words for the class to guess based on three different themes - English, Math and Science. The game is a fun way of testing students' vocabulary and general knowledge skills. Genyos is from Diwa Learning Systems, the country's leader in providing ICT-integrated educational materials. To help build your school into 21st century learning, log on to www.genyos.com.ph or call Diwa Learning Systems at 893-8501.

AdU supports farmers

ASUMPTION UNIVERSITY PLAYED HOST last March 9, to four farmers' groups who were part of the Lupang Hinirang, Lupang Hinirang Farmers' Pilgrimage for Corp Extension with Industry or Carpofi. The four groups were from Bamban, Bacnal, Libacan, and Quezon. The Cultural Affairs Office (CAO), Integrated Community Extension Services (ICES) Office, Office for Students Affairs (OSA), the Office of the President in collaboration with the archdiocese of Manila prepared a short program as evidence and expression of support to the farmers at the Assumption University Theater.

The farmers have been fighting for ownership of the land that they have been tilling. Their walkers to the University for several days is part of their series of several campaigns in Manila to solicit support for their cause. Assumption University is just one of the institutions that these group sought help from. In the past, they have also been showed up by other educational institutions, non-government organizations, private individuals, and other compassionate, socially involved groups.

Part of the program was the screening of Uttal Caroline's documentary the long walk of the Bataan farmers from Mindanao to Manila. The documentary is narrated by the struggle of Filipino farmers to fight for the land that they deserve. UP-Diliman Sociology graduate, Caroline has several awards and films in her name, including Manilal on Mars, Mangguguyam, Kawasaki Boys, Trolls is an Answer, Tagak-Impon to Tawirahan, Hinahanggang Libin ng Sinibahan, Liberating Loops, Keeping the Coop Fire Burning, and No Time for Play.

"Our support for our farmers goes beyond hearing them to our presidents. We are also actively participating in lobbying efforts through fr. Nonong Palmelo, who sits as a members of the negotiating panel for the Carper extension," said fr. Gregorio L. Bañaga, Jr., C.Ss., university president.

It was also during the program that farmer-leader Lusita Dazmilan-Ilarina, a former accountancy student from 1977-1980 and a native of Tayabas was given a Special Presidential Citation Quezon for her unwavering support to the farmers. The citation partly read, "... for her unfailing commitment to various advocacies, particularly to the cause of farmers and women in her province and in the country, thus transforming the lives of fellow Filipinos; and for using her Adamonian education as a means to serve the socially disadvantaged." Ilarina was named one of the Ten Outstanding Women of the Philippines 2004 together with accomplished women like Congresswoman Gina Lopez, Gov. Mona Lisa Seva, and even Grace Poe-Llamanzares.

Four OBMCI Athletes qualify for NCR Palarong Pambansa

FOUR O.D. MONTESSORI children received rough competition to qualify and represent the City of San Juan at the recent National Capital Region Athletic Meet. Winners of the 14 cities and 3 municipalities of Metro Manila converged at Pasig City to determine representatives in the NCR at the Palarong Pambansa.

OBMCI's lone tanker, Marvin de los Cuevas of IR-C (Gerverdik), awarded 4 silver and 1 bronze medal to earn his slot in the San Juan delegation. The 12-year old swimmer teamed up with the Xavier School sharks.

The hard-hitting player and artful net defender of Michelle Bores (IV-A) and Kamille Go (II-C) did not go unnoticed as they were handpicked to beef up the line-up of perennial champions and undefeated SJA. This dream team collaborated to win their first gold medal in a hotched finish match against San Juan National. The San Juan team is now tuned by coach Kim Lee of SJA and Coach Jessie dela Pella of OBMCI Greenhills.

The boards and final clincher belongs to catcher Charles Herrander (IV-A) who marched to the finals unscreened. Charles has a team became medal from the Philippine Olympic Festival last June 2008.

Ateneo tops mobile phone competition

By Jerry E. Esplanada

ATENEO DE Manila University (Ateneo de Manila U) got the first and third prizes in the 5th SWEEP Innovation and Excellence Awards of telecommunications giant Smart Communications, Inc.

An entry from Ateneo de Davao University (ADEU) was second. Two other ADMU entries were also recognized: the 3D Studies to the natural search for the next innovative student applications designed by student-faculty teams from Smart partner tertiary schools, and Mobile Direct for Smart Wireless Engineering Education Program. UPMSP wanted to help raise the level of engineering and technology in the country, particularly in electronics and communications engineering.

ADMU's "Smart DrumGoods corp," designed for the collection of relief goods through social networking and the use of Smart cellular phones and the Internet, bagged the grand prize of P500,000. For the team are Carlo Quirino, Abdiel Khan and Mark Peterson. Tria, all senior electronics and communications engineering students, and Mont Belvedere Garcia, in its France-to-an-exchange student program. Their mentor, Ronald Hess, also received a trophy during the SWEEP awards ceremony at the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City.

The entry also won another P500,000 for the school.

ADEU's "Brandon and Rowan Mascapproval at Davao Gulf," which used fingerprint global positioning and geographical information systems, got the team and the school P300,000 each.

"Team Bohol," another ADEU entry that would alert subscribers to the threat of flood through SMS (short messaging service), MMS (multimedia messaging service) or the Internet, too fired, winning for the team and the school P150,000 each.

The seven other finalists included three from Bulacan State University, one from Systems Plus College Foundation and another from the University of San Carlos. Each received P50,000 each.

Community pride

At the awarding ceremonies, Smart also announced the winners of the 1st "Show-go-se-kwan" Learning Challenge where teachers and students of its 200-plus partner public high schools used computers and Internet technologies to generate web-based information and educational materials about their communities.

Magi City Science High School's "Ilaw ng Sining Gabay sa ng Halamgyun Paraiso ng Our Lady of Perpetual Sa Lihtanan" showcase y" won grand champion and received a cash prize of P50,000.

The entry, submitted by Krissa Mae Esperanza, Nikzaljil Lopez, Gabriel Dalisola and Jhan John Tamayo (with ICT teacher Josefa Castañeda as adviser), also topped the awards in the category "giving the high school pa- ation" as additional P50,000.

Paper-wise and then would docume part of think educating "Ito sinisi- world of improvements in our school's computer lab."

The school is about 700 to Banao- per year, Nueva Ecija's gov't experts of computer said with five-star pass- latest inspection.

Winners in other categories that al- received P50,000 each were: Grandmentation of "Paleo: The Function of Myth in Organizational Way of Life," Science and Technology Center, Lapu-Lapu City, Cebu; "Sustainable Livelihood Tingig Lawa," Lubi Integrated Bukidnon High School, South Cotabato; Cluster- gange and Literature," "The Untold Istory of the Iranian," Bonifacio National High School (Sindili and outlawers;) "Assisting Mainly Aeching," Consolacion Montessori High School in Consolacion, Cebu; "Sustainable Agriculture Integrated Livelihood Project," Laguna Vocational High School, Binan, Oriental.

Special awards

Special awards were given to Aga- nan National High school's "Storyo- Bitoon: a Star of Hope," Basa to Com- Assembly Impact; Bacolor National High School's "Banaue at Tanay" (photographic play); Dona Narcisa High School's "The Community Structure of Mus- gowan in the Bukidnon River" (podcast- ing); and Bacolor High School (comic/art collaboration). Each got P10,000 cash.

The Orion National High School team got another P10,000 for winning the best booth award.

The Dream Go to Asia contract is in- time with Smart's Internet for All cam- paign to encourage learning by doing, which the company says "can best be done by going online."

Smart aims to be the "leading com- ter in building an online network of educators and learners who are highly capable of generating rich local con- tent for the promotion and develop- ment of communities."

A total of 1,200 entries from 40 schools were judged on educational content (40 percent), ICT (information and communications technology) integration (30 percent), group collaboration (20 percent), and community impact (10 percent).

Judges were Ramon Isberto, head of Smart's public affairs group; Benita Hester, senior manager for corporate partnerships; Ramon Ferrer, Philippine Business for Social Progress deputy executive director; former Education Secretary Fe Hidalgo; Jeswel Hess, Media of the University of Cebu, Peggy Chua, Web Philippines president; Mary Jo Lee Anayo-Bautista of Community of Learners Foundation; Simon Guerrero of Synergeia Foundation; and Mike Luz of the International Institute for World Business and Inn.

SWEEP winning team from Ateneo de Manila University composed of Lorcan, Khan, coach Sicat, and Tan with Smart's Maria G. Tamayo, Cynthia Cupin, Ramon R. Isberto and Byron Tabada

Bobbit by Sa- Announcing ncias from Naga City Science High School with (left) Isberto, and (right) principal Sulpicio C. Alfonso III (right)

Row, row your boat

TOP SCHOOL teams will compete in the Manila Bay Summer Interport Festival, March 28-29.

Organized by the Manila Broadcasting Company and the City of Manila, with the Philippine Coast Guard, the event features the crews from the University of Santo Tomas, University of the Philippines, San Beda College, and De La Salle University, who will compete in the Men's, Ladies, and Mixed Span shorts- outrigger.

RCT were five straight championships in the inter-collegiate derby. It also competed in international competitions such championships in Indonesia, Hong Kong, and China.

The San Beda team has experience in both local and international events.

RP's paddlers have made it to the national team.

But Isabela has the youngest team, but it has competed in many local regatta host cities.

The crewers from Manila schools will include Team One Philippine Navy, Philippine National Police, Generation Sail, Jacaranda, Lighthouse Technik Philippines, Aqua Fortis, Force, PORT Fortitudine, Manila Dragons, Manila Bayou Paddlers, Manila Polos, Blue Phoenix, Malate Mas, BCP Sea Dragons, Dragon Pilipinas, and the ESC Dragon Club.

INQUIRER

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Mechanics:

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3. Submit a certification from your high school stating that you are enrolled in and attend each's Certification is Authenticity signed by the author.

4. All entries must be accompanied by the Official Entry Coupon. Entries submitted without this coupon will be automatically disqualified.

5. All Filipino Citizens are eligible to join, EXCEPT employees of Philippine Daily Inquirer and Lyceum of the Philippines University and their immediate up to the second degree of consanguinity.

6. All entries must be sent to: Mr. Marketing and Advertising Office, Lyceum of the Philippines University, Intramuros, Manila. Entries must be received no later than March 31, 2009.

7. Selection Committee is composed of Professors of Lyceum of the Philippines University (LPU) and Editors from Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI).

8. Winning entry will be published in the April 19 issue of this paper.

Inquirer - Lyceum Essay Writing Contest

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EUREKA! Queena N. Lee-Chua

Lessons old and new in Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIA IS A LAND OF CONtrasts—fresh skyscrapers and unrebuffed houses, luxurious flowers and trafficked customs, cosmopolitan cities and quaint towns.

There is also a blend of old and new in the things to be enjoyed—and learned. On a recent trip to the capital city Kuala Lumpur and neighboring areas, my husband and I, with my 10-year-old son Scott, not only learned about the culture, but also had fun.

Archery

Archery is one of the oldest sports. In ancient times, archery could determine the fate of nations. Allies like Huns and the Mongols conquered much of Asia, and the Turks earned kinship the Crusaders time and again—all through the skills of their archers, who often fired backwards on horseback.

Today archers shoot to bring home to their country in the Olympic Games. But archery is also for amateurs, as we visited to two Stars Archery centers, in Jasmine Perennial Mall and Genting Highlands Theme Park, recorded.

We were given the protect against the friction of the string), and arm bracers (to keep our elbows sturdy). Then, in separate lanes, we were coached by certified instructors how to position the recurve bow with a carbon fiber shafts part and to set it in frame.

Our lanes had no targets, so we had to take aim with our eyes, but coach said, "It's better to get the correct technique rather than rely on scopes or arrows."

Indoor archery—at least at Stars Archery—is pretty safe. The tips of the arrows are blunt, hard enough to pierce Styrofoam targets 10 meters away, but not to shoot us to inflict a puncture.

At first, after shooting a dozen arrows, our arms started to ache. But we were getting used to the weight, and our aim improved.

Archery teaches discipline and concentration. To hit the target consistently, the mind has to focus. Paradoxically, it is also relaxing—and addictive.

Scott said, "When you have the arrow go through against the target, I guarantee that you will feel like Robin Hood hitting a bullseye—both skyscrapers and unrebuffed houses, luxurious flowers and trafficked customs, cosmopolitan cities and quaint towns."

Pottery

A soft silvery metal that can be- comes easily to the touch, pewter has dominated Malaysian culture for centuries. Since 1885, the Royal Selangor Pewter Factory has been producing pewter for the king, and its products are known throughout the world.

Now technology has invaded this age-old craft, with extensive machine production areas and hi- tech gadgetry, but the best pieces still require painstaking work by hand.

At the factory, we saw the old and the new, and learned about the origins and science of pewter. We struck different materials to hear the distinct sound of each piece and watched the pewter- tempera. We saw antique pewter pieces, alongside modern designs, including a two-story replica of the Petronas Towers, the tallest links towers on earth.

In a workshop called School of Hard Knocks, we became modern-day pewtersmiths. Armed with hammer and mallet, we scraped and shaped our own pewter dish. Under the watchful guidance of a master, we hammered away, taking care not to destroy the pewter metal.

We also received apprentice- smith aprons and certificates to attest to our skills. Scott said, "When you listen to the thwack of the hammers, I just- sense that you will feel like Hephaestus, the God of the Forges, who can bend metals to his will!"

Skydiving

Bright lights must not to be the domain of astronauts or professional skydivers in free fall. But Sky Venture in Genting High- stands. Theme Park gives every- one a chance to feel the exhilara- tion of jumping out of an air- plane and falling through the sky. At the state-of-the-art steel enclosed wind tunnel, visitors can blow up to 220 kilometers per hour.

To prepare for the experi- ence, we donned jumpsuits, and glasses. Then we donned bright orange flight suits. The instruc- tor gave a lecture on the proper flying (please bal. Breathe) and signals to control attitude, di- rection, speed (up or down, left or right, faster or slower). We entered the tunnel and were im- mediately swept up by the winds.

How safe is the wind tunnel? If we were well, participants can claim against the walls, causing bruises, dislocations and other injuries.

But the safety record is very good—no one has been seriously injured in the 20 years of its operation. Moreover, parents should ensure that children lis- ten to instructions and follow the guide carefully; otherwise they should not be allowed to go in.

But flying is great exercise. Aerobic and low impact, it in- clines adrenaline and calm. first- ed all, we flew with the instruc- tor, who assisted us effortlessly and trained us around, performing stunts.

Oh yes, the tunnel was trans- parent, so part of the thrill was to see laughing faces outside. At the end, we decided to splurge and bought the video. After all, for once in our lives, we were truly flying!

E-mail the author at lees- book@yahoo.com.

SCOTT takes aim at Stars Archery.

SULIT [soo- lit]:
Discovering Value for Money Education

When you say Don Bosco Global City, you have several questions like: What is it? Why should I go there? And Magkano daw?

Those are the common questions we get when we tell people where DGSC is. Fortunately, people will have that impres- sion because of the activities going in- addition, new facilities, centralized air- conditioning, and an overall cool envi- ronment. But, when they find out how much we have to offer, the answer be- comes "At most impossible." "Di nga?" "Aye! Sad." "It's unbelievable." "I can af- ford this!" and occasionally "We are sold!"

What is intuitive to Don Bosco, its definition of- ten has to be explained to outsiders. But it means that the school constantly should be conscious of whether or not it provides their hard-earned money- the phrase is clear.

And precisely is the school you enrolled to- worth it? Does it have updated and relevant curriculum? Are their teaching methods effective?

Do they have nice facilities? Great faculty? A safe and clean campus? A tuition affordable? Do they have parental support? An environment conducive to learning? Enthusiasm and dedicat- ed student support staff? Empirical students and administrators? How high is it to count "Sulit ba?"

At DGSC we pay attention to the various val- enables in ensuring our students get the best ser- vices. Learning must be carefully designed innova- tive programs to the delivery of its instruction. Its its goal in developing its students holistically. At these fundamental with a very reasonable and ex- pected tuition fee structure.

DGSC invites families to come be- coming a bigger and better school, consistently striving to be an educational center of excellence in forming students in the global community.

In DGSC, SULIT stands for Superior, Inspired Mind, Learner-centered, and Student-Teaching.

So still looking for value for your money? Look no further. DGSC is definitely worth it. Check us out.

What I've Learned

Practical art and wisdom from women who loved fashion

Jean Goulbourn
Fashion designer and fashion educator

MY GRANDMOTHER ALWAYS SAID, "Beautiful clothes are the weakness of women and some women would go to all lengths to acquire them. But if you can sew your own clothes, you'll never go wayward." My grandma said if we could sew, we could run only support our passion for clothes but also feed ourselves.

Then one school I did in New York when I went to study at the Fashion Institute of Technology. I sewed ball bottom pants and sold them to my classmates.

My grandmother taught me how to sew. I learned at age 13. I spent my summers in my grandmother's house in Legazpi with my aunts. Salvacion (a.k.a. Shim), which became the name of the fashion school the sisters would later put up), Purificacion (Puring), Lourdes and Mercedes. At 7 years old, I was quite a fashionista. I still remember the yellow organza dress they made for me.

When my aunt Puring saw that I had an interest in fashion, she gave me pieces of material to sew. From her I learned how to sew clothes. It is such a beautiful and sophisticated material but so hard to control. Puring taught me how to work the fabric by memorizing Japanese home paper. It was a most fascinating thing. Up to now we do that when we work with chiffon.

By the time I went to New York to study at FIT, I already knew how to make patterns because my aunts had taught me. By the time I got very disinclined when she pattern is wrong.

FIT was a walk in the park. My grades were A's. With my talent, I had to convince the parents for individual lessons. In the 70s, you did more—6, 8, 10, 12—and the mannequin for each one was perfect. How easy!

Patterns

When you make a pattern, you're like an architect designing a house. The armhole and the neck are the windows. The bodice is the main space.

When you cut a piece of material on the bias, the fabric covers as much of the body without having to be sewn. In contrast, the lower seams, the better. When you cut on the bias, the material follows the body gracefully. But you have to understand the material. Every fabric has a life of its own. It's really fascinating.

Colors

I learned about colors from my grandmother. She had three boxes—or which she had her sweaters make polka dots. She used natural dye on the polka ... autumn was pulverized and the color was cooked with salt. It was so exciting for me ... all colors could be mixed together. My grandmother was always crafting so much at sunset and she'd test me. What colors do you see in the sunset? Orange ... a bit pinkish yellow, gold, the varying shades of the sky.

Salvacion taught me more about colors. In her apartment on Taft Avenue, they had beautiful paintings by Cezanne and Lautrec. I'd hear her say in her dotes, "Did you notice the blue there in Cezanne? That's the kind of blue I need." That was when I realized there wasn't just one blue but many, many blues.

Shim's colors were absolutely stunning. She was very meticulous. If she was designing something for daytime wear, she'd hold the fabric by the window. For evening wear, she would use four spotlights when choosing colors. She had to know the kind of lighting under which a client would wear her gown.

Embroidery

Salvacion admired the embroidery skills of my grandmother. She lived in Paris so she was inspired by Lesage (the house of embroidery in Paris that did hand embroidery for the major fashion houses). Shim was never a fan of Chanel. Chanel was the shift, the jacket and the use of textured wool. My aunt loved draping, so she was very partial to Balenciaga and Madame Grès. Later in her life, she became a fan of Yves Saint Laurent when he started showing clothes embroidered with the art of Matisse, Picasso, Chagall and Van Gogh. YSL would trace the designs with Swarovsky rhinestones and beads.

At their school, Salvacion taught fashion design and illustration while Purificacion taught pattern-making and tailoring. They were very close. They loved each other so much and their sentences were there in the passion.

It was Shim who taught me how to drape on the mannequin. And it was Puring who taught me the techniques of pattern-making. Shim was the artist, Puring was the technician.

Watching Shim work with the likes of Divine Monsalvar, Mary Pryor, Chera Alonzo and Carlyn Manning gave me such a high. I used to love it when they came around for a fitting.

One of Shim's most interesting creations was the wedding gown for Linda Garcia (daughter of late President Carlos P. Garcia). It had an 18-yard train that took six page boys to carry. I also remember the concoction she designed for the Hayashibara Dance Company, one to portfolio where she had all ribbons electric pleated.

Shim never talked to clients about price. That was Puring's problem.

From Puring I learned from and versatile management. She taught me to always be aware of time. She was always reminding me to save my money and invest it. "Don't think small, think big," she'd say.

Shim often counseled: Never get involved in any story or gossip that could affect your client. Be warm, but don't get too familiar. Be aware. Give the love that you can because every dress you create is a part of who you are. It's a God-given talent so be careful what you do with it.

Shim always said: Though my mouth records service to the client, we are artists. We always have to maintain an elegance and a graciousness about us.

Jean Goulbourn is perhaps the most fashionable fashion educator in the country. As president of SIM Center, she creates the most gorgeous lines of locally woven clothes and accessories. As chair of Global Vital Alliance, her main concern is wellness through cleansing and organic nutrition.

alma matter

WHERE JEAN GOULBOURN WAS EDUCATED

Elementary:
St. Agnes School
Legazpi City
High School:
St. Paul's College
College:
St. Paul's College and Fashion Institute of Technology (NY)

Iconic designer . . .

From page F1

their time. Salvacion even wrote the book that became the manual for dressmaking at Shim.

Shim was quick to spot talent. She personally mentored her protégés, one of whom was Ilonzo.

"I had only been at Shim a few weeks when she asked me to watch," Campos recalls. "I told her I didn't know how but she said she'd help. I was amazed like someone who really had vision. She would let me watch her in her shop. I was given the opportunity to learn. I am very grateful to her."

Campos later became a successful designer in the Old Boutique Square, then for the Hong Kong-based Shanghai Tang. He currently has a shop here on Greenbelt 5.

Shim conveyed more than lessons about fashion. She modeled discipline, profession-alism and integrity in the way she conducted herself, her classes and her business.

"Henry Po may not be known locally, but he has worked for American television shows like 'That 70's Show' and 'Heroes,' as well as with Hollywood designer Bob Mackie.

As a student at Shim, Po was asked by Salvacion to help with a fashion show in the Middle East, Greece, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Kuwait. He was taught the secrets of cutting ("Make your lines curved, not straight so there will be more movement"), of draping and of finishing the clothes so nothing shop could be worn inside out. He also learned the professionalism that enabled him to work in Hollywood.

"Preparing once for a fashion show, Shim's forgot about her own dress. Dusty (Shim' long-time assistant) draped a piece of material on her, sewed it then and there and that was what she wore. This helped me when I went to the United States. I learned that you can your work well and quickly and then it's on to the next project."

Eddie Ocampo, another Shim-based fashion designer and Salvacion developed his unique style of sketches after Shim opened his drawings. "She taught me to create my own look," he says. His drawings are so good he has never had a problem finding work.

Ocampo recalls that Shim was strict and she was a perfectionist. It was she who suggested he change the spelling of his name from Oscar to Oskar for more drama.

The lessons Shim taught were evident in her own children.

Daughter Sandy, who is in advertising in Hong Kong, says, "My mom would tell me, 'Rise above the chaos and focus on what you're doing.'"

For Shim, genius came hand in hand with discipline. Ron Mark, a painter, recalls how despite suffering from hand problems, she finished a wedding gown before she allowed herself in her talons in a hospital. "That's my training. Finish what you promise. No excuses."

CESAR Ilonzo

JOE Sanzo

BOBBY Navarro

HENRY Po

As a teacher, Shim conveyed more than lessons in fashion, but instilled passion, professionalism and a high standard of excellence in her students.

(The author is project manager for the Shim Legacy Project. If you have photos, poems or anecdotes about Shim as a teacher, call her at 4102279 or 09175939846 or e-mail shimlegacy@gmail.com.)

Young 'entrepinay'

SECOND AND THIRD YEAR entrepreneurship students of Miriam College are showcasing bright and commercially viable retail ideas in "Entrepinay 2009: Young Women Inspired," March 21 to April 4, Level 1 at Robinsons Galleria.

Part of Businesswise Walls Fo-Hap Corner program that promotes entrepreneurship among college students, the retail ventures include that can environment-friendly and, through the use of healthy, organic cosmetics, promote wellness.

Featured are products by Blissful Blend, Bright Senses, Cosmic Crops, Pineapple Diary, Mani de Bodelle, Pure Hero, Sunbee, Magpantay, Kitchie Corner, Mud* Cookies, MPBP Fruit, Oishi Lolo, Rainbags, Pitterbag, Skinspa Girl, Over the Edge, C. & R. and Starbox.

Ester Corner has featured, among others, Jose Rodis College and its School of University Communities and Lipa students.

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